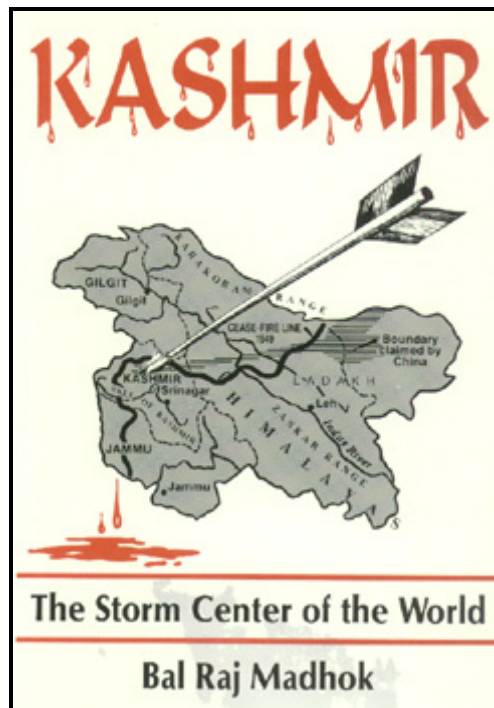


KASHMIR

The Storm Center of the World

by Bal Raj Madhok



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Published by:

A. Ghosh

5720 W. Little York, #216

Houston, Texas 77091

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The Storm Center of the World

Bal Raj Madhok

CHAPTER I

ABODE OF KASHYAP

Kashmir is the name of a Himalayan valley situated about 5,000 feet above sea level.

Eighty miles in length and forty miles in width, this valley of the river Jehlum, the Vatisa of the Rigveda, pronounced as "Vyath in Kashmiri," is the largest valley of its kind in the world. The Vyath rises from Verinag springs on the foot of the Panchal range that surrounds this valley; flows north through the capital city of Srinagar and Wuler lake and then enters the mountains through a gorge resembling the mouth of a boar called "Varaha" in Sanskrit near the town named "Varaha Molla" now called Baramula on the northern tip of the valley. The valleys of the Liddar, the Sindh and a number of smaller streams that flow into the Jehlum add to the size and beauty of this celebrated valley.

According to tradition recorded in a number of Sanskrit texts and chronicles of Kashmir this valley was once a vast lake. It was converted into an alluvial plain when Kashyap, a great "Rishi," made an opening into the surrounding mountains near Baramula.

As a result the water of the lake was drained out and the submerged land became a habitable valley. It then came to be known as "Kashyap Marga" the abode of Kashyap from which the name Kashmir is derived. Geomorphological evidence has confirmed that the valley was originally a vast lake.

History of Kashmir began with the settlement of the Indo-Aryan people in it in pre-Mahabharata days. It became a centre of Indo-vedic culture and civilization. Sanskrit literature is replete with references to it. It is often described as "Nandanvan" the pleasure garden of Bharat.

Unlike many other parts of India, we have recorded history of Kashmir from the earliest times. The oldest of these records is Nilamat Purana. It deals with the legends pertaining to the origin of Kashmir, the ordinances of Nila, the earliest ruler of Kashmir and gives detailed information about its numerous "Nagas" or springs and lakes that dot the valley and its surrounding ranges. Other notable sources of its history are: "Kultanimala Kavya" of Damodar Gupta, "Deshopadesha" of Kshemendra, "Vikrama Devacharita" of Bilhan, "Rajtarangini" of Kalhan and chronicle of "Jonrajya" who wrote in 15th century. Kalhan recorded the history of Kashmir from the Mahabharata period but the real beginning of Kashmir's history can be traced to the rule of Mauryan emperor Ashoka who built Shrinagar as its capital.

Kashmir was made a centre of Mahayana Buddhism by Kushan emperor, Kanishka. He built a town "Kanishkapura," now called Kaspura. It is situated about five miles from Baramula on the Baramula- Srinagar road. He also built many Buddhist viharas and convened the fourth

Buddhist council there. Archeological remains of the viharas built by him have been found near Harvana Lake.

Hun king Mihirgula, occupied the throne of Kashmir for some time after he was driven out of Punjab in the fourth century A.D. He later embraced Shaivism.

The most celebrated king of Kashmir was Lalitaditya who ruled over it in the seventh century A.D. He extended his sway beyond the valley. He built the famous sun temple - the Martanda temple - on a plateau overlooking the town of Anantanag and the holy springs of Mattan in the Liddar valley. The ruins of this great temple which was destroyed by Sultan Sikandar in the 14th century point to the glory that was Kashmir at that time.

Avantivarmen was another notable ruler of Kashmir who ruled in the 11th century. He built a new capital, Avantipur, mid-way between Anantnag and Srinagar. His prime Minister, Sayyah, deepened the Vitasta from the Wular lake to Baramullah which helped in reclamation of more land. A new town Sayyapur now called Sopore was built on the reclaimed land.

Shadow of Islam first fell on Kashmir in the 11th century when Sultan Mahmood of Ghazani made an unsuccessful attempt to conquer it. But some Muslim adventurers and preachers of Turkish, Persian and Khorasani origin entered the valley in the wake of his invasion.

The last effective Hindu ruler of Kashmir was Sahdev who ascended the throne in 1301 A.D. Two Muslim adventurers, Shahmir from Khorasan and Lanker Chak from Gilgit, came to Kashmir during his reign and entered his service. Another foreign adventurer to enter his service was Rinchan, a Buddhist Bhotia from Laddakh. He usurped the throne of Kashmir and married his queen Kota rani, daughter of Ramachandra, the commander-in-chief of Sahdev in 1319. He wanted to embrace Shaivism but Brahmins refused to accept him. He, then, turned to Islam and took the name Sadaruddin.

Rinchan died in 1323 A.D. Udyan Dev, brother of Sahdev, then ascended the throne. He married Kota rani and ruled upto 1338 A.D. After the death of Udyandev, Kota rani took over the reigns of government. But she could not rule for long. Shahmir, who had entrenched himself in Udyandev's court, staged a coup and took control of the government.

After capturing power, Shahmir made Kota rani captive. He wanted to marry her but she spurned his offer. She was then forcibly put into the harem of Shahmir. She committed suicide the next morning. Thus, the throne of Kashmir passed into the hands of a foreign Muslim adventurer whose conduct can be compared with that of Haider Ali who usurped the throne of Mysore fourteen centuries later. This marked the beginning of Muslim rule over Kashmir in 1339 A.D.

The Indo-vedic culture is writ large over every nook and corner of Kashmir. Most of its village and town names end with suffix "Gam" derived from Sanskrit word "Gram" or "Pur" or "Nag." Every scenic site of this picturesque valley has a temple or remains of an ancient temple on it. The sky-line of the capital city Srinagar is dominated by two hillocks, Shankaracharya and Hari Parvat atop which stands the shrine of Shankaracharya temple and a Kali temple. Hari Parvat has a fort of the same name on it.

Ram kund and Devi mandir near Baramullah, ruins of Kanishkapur and Pattan between Baramullah and Srinagar, Shankaracharya temple of Srinagar, ruins of Martand temple and of Avantipura between Srinagar and Anantnag, holy springs of Kheer Bhawani, Anantnag and Mattan and the holy cave of Amarnath, link the present day Kashmir with its Hindu past and rest of Hindustan.

The Muslim Rule

Shahmir was the real founder of Muslim rule in Kashmir. Rinchan Shah, who came to power by virtue of his marriage with Kota rani and who embraced Islam in 1319 AD, ruled only for three years. Hindu rule returned when Udyan Bev ascended the throne after Rinchan's death.

Shamiri dynasty founded by Shah Mir ruled over Kashmir for over 200 years. Shah Mir was a Khorasani and not a Kashmiri. But in course of time SHAHMIRIS got assimilated, took to Kashmiri language and way of life.

Fourth ruler of the dynasty was Sikander who is called 'But-shikan' i.e. iconolast because he destroyed almost all Hindu temples of Kashmir including that of Martand and confronted the people with the choice of conversion to Islam or death. Most of the Kashmiri Hindus were converted or killed. A few Brahmin families took shelter in Jammu region across Panchal range. The present Hindus of Kashmir are progeny of those refugees. According to Kashmiri tradition he burnt seven maunds of sacred threads of the murdered Hindus whose bodies were thrown into Dal Lake to form what is now called 'Butt-mazar' i.e. grave of Brahmins. This is a bund which runs across the Dal lake from Nasim garden to Nishat garden.

Zain-ul-Abdin who succeeded Sikander in 1420 AD brought a welcome change. He not only stopped forced conversions but also allowed those Hindus who had fled away to return to their home land. He appointed Hindus to high places in his court. Jonraj the famous chronicler who continued the chronicle of Kalhan and brought it to date enjoyed his patronage.

Shahmiri dynasty was replaced by Chak dynasty in 1561 AD. Ghazi-chek the founder of this dynasty was a scion of Lanker Chak, the Muslim adventurer from Gilgit who came to Kashmir in the reign of Sahdev. Chaks were Shia. Therefore, Shia sect of Islam got a foothold in Kashmir during Chak rule.

Usuf Shah the last effective Chak ruler of Kashmir was defeated by a Mughal army led by Raja Bhagwan Dass, during the reign of Akbar. Usuf Shah died in Patna as an exile. His son, Yakub Shah, ruled over Kashmir for some time but was defeated and displaced by the Mughals in 1686 AD.

Akbar made Kashmir a separate province of Mughal empire. His son Jahangir had special liking for Kashmir. He described it as "Heaven on earth" and embellished it with the famous Mughal gardens.

The Mughals used Bhimber, Rajouri - Nandi -Marg route for going to Kashmir from Punjab. This area was inhabited by war-like Suddan and Chib Hindu Rajputs many of whom were forcibly converted to Islam under orders of Jahangir. Aurangzeb let loose a reign of terror on Hindus of Kashmir.

Later Mughals patronized Kashmiri Brahmins who took to Persian language with gusto. Many of them came down to Delhi and Agra to work as scribes and tutors in the Mughals' households. Mohammed Shah, one of the later Mughal rulers of Delhi, decreed that Kashmir's Brahmins should be described as Kashmiri Pundits to distinguish them from local Brahmins. This name has stuck with them since then.

Mughal rule in Kashmir ended formally in 1752 when Ahamed Shah Abdali annexed it to his kingdom of Kabul. But, beginning of the end of Mughal rule took place in 1739 when Nadir Shah sacked Delhi and gave a body blow to the decadent Mughal empire.

Afghan rule over Kashmir, which is considered to be the cruelest and the worst, lasted till 1819 when it was conquered by Diwan Mohakam Chand, a General of Maha Raja Ranjit Singh. It then became a "Suba" or Province of Lahore Kingdam. Thus Hindu rule returned to Kashmir after a lapse of about five centuries.

The Dogras

Kashmir passed into the hands of Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu, a feudatory of Lahore kingdom in 1846. He entered into a treaty with the East India Company in March 1846 as a result of which the British recognized him as de jure master of all the hill territories of Lahore Kingdom lying to the east of the Indus and west of the Ravi. This territory was taken over by the British after the first Anglo-Punjab war of 1845 in lieu of war indemnity of Rs.75 lakh which Lahore Durbar was not in a position to pay.

Gulab Singh was already de-facto master of all this territory excepting Kashmir Valley which was a separate province of Lahore Kingdom.

Therefore, the only real acquisition of Gulab Singh as a result of this treaty was Kashmir. That is why it is alleged by his critics that he purchased Kashmir for Rs.75 lakhs from the British. But this is not correct. The British at that time were in no position to dislodge Gulab Singh and annex this territory to their expanding empire. Gulab Singh had to wage a war against the Governor of Kashmir who under secret instruction from Lahore Durbar, refused to hand over Kashmir to him. He therefore got Kashmir by force of arms.

This historical background of Kashmir Valley, the real bone of contention between India and Pakistan, is of vital importance for proper understanding of Kashmir problems. It points to certain realities which are vital for arriving at a durable settlement of this problem.

Because of its geographical situation, Kashmir valley has a distinct geo-political identity different from the territories surrounding it across the Himalayan ranges, which remain snow bound and impassable for four to six months in a year. That is why it has always been a separate kingdom or a separate province of the various Indian empires of which it become a part in course of history. Some of its rulers like Lalitaditya did extend their way to the territories beyond the surrounding mountains for some time. But that did not in any way affect the distinct identity and character of Kashmir valley as such.

The second reality to be noted is that Kashmir has always been a part of the Indian state system. Geography, history and culture have made it an inseparable part of Bharat-Khand and Jambu-Dweep now called Hindustan or India.

The third fact to be kept in mind is that even though Kashmir came under Muslim rule and most of its people were forcibly converted to Islam it never got completely cut-off from its Indo-vedic cultural moorings. Islam sat rather lightly on its people who continued to cherish their pre-Islamic culture and way of life till recently. Their links with the rest of Hindustan were never snapped. Its holy shrines like Amarnath cave and Holy springs like Mattan and Khir Bhavani continue to attract pilgrims from all over Hindustan. These links were reinforced during 30 years of Sikh rule and 100 years of Dogra rule. Jammu and Kashmir was one of the 500 and odd princely states of India before the British left it for good in 1947.

The cultural affinity of Kashmir with the rest of India is evident from its language, art, literature and architecture. All its mosques still look like Buddhist Gompas and temples. None of them has minaret which is an essential feature of mosque architecture all over the world. The only mosque

with a minaret in Arab-Persian style was built by Sheik Abdullah at Hazratbal around 1980. Most of the Muslim saints of Kashmir are still called "rishis." Kashmiri language, which is directly derived from Sanskrit, was written in Sharda script, a form of Devnagari script till Persian script was imposed on it by Muslim rulers.

Recent developments which have made Kashmir a storm centre of the world and dragged it into the vertex of international power politics, are directly connected with the developments in and about Jammu and Kashmir state of which it became a part in 1846. Therefore, the story of the making of Jammu and Kashmir state, its relations with the rest of India and British Government and recent socio-political developments in it are very relevant and important for any study of genesis of the Kashmir problem and its changing contours and dimensions over the years.

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The Storm Center of the World

Bal Raj Madhok

CHAPTER II

THE MAKING OF JAMMU & KASHMIR STATE

Acquisition of Kashmir valley by Gulab Singh in 1846 and its incorporation in his vast Dogra Kingdom marked the beginning of a new and, from the point of view of the present study, a crucial phase in the long and chequered history of the land of Kashyap. The developments which have put Kashmir on the map of the world as a storm centre are directly linked with the international developments connected with the steady expansion of the British, the Russian and the Chinese empires in the 19th century. With the annexation of Lahore kingdom by the British which made the British Indian empire contiguous to Afghanistan and push of Czarist Russia toward Hindu-Kush mountain. Jammu and Kashmir state became the meeting ground of the three empires the British, the Russian and the Chinese. The global interests of the British then demanded that they should have a direct grip over J & K state. This impelled them to put pressure on its Dogra rulers to make them amenable to their game plan.

It is, therefore, important to have a close look on the kingdom that Gulab Singh built, its geographical position, demographic complexion and the place of vale of Kashmir in it.

An objective assesment of Gulab Singh who carved out for himself and his successors a virtually independent kingdom of over 84,000 sq. miles stretching from the plains of Punjab to the Pamirs, Sinkiang and Tibet at a time when other Indian kingdoms, some of which had a hoary past, were falling flat like houses of cards before the fast moving British stream roller, is also relevant.

Born in 1792, Gulab Singh was a scion of the ruling family of Jammu which was one of the 22 petty Rajput states in which the sub-mountainous "Kandi" area to the north of the Punjab was then divided. He left his home at the age of seventeen in search of a soldierly fortune. He intended to go to Kabul and join the army of Shah Shuja, but his companions refused to go beyond the Indus. Then, he decided to join the service of Maharaja Ranjit Singh who was at that time making his mark in the Punjab. He joined the army of Ranjit Singh in 1809, the year in which the latter signed the famous treaty of Amritsar with the British which gave him a free hand to expand his kingdom to the West of the Sutlej.

Gulab Singh soon distinguished himself as an intrepid soldier with a high sense of duty and devotion to Ranjit Singh. He made his mark in many a campaign which Ranjit Singh undertook to conquer Kangra, Multan and Hazara. He also introduced his two younger brothers, Dhian Singh and Suchet Singh, in the court of Ranjit Singh. Both of them later played a very important role in the making and moulding of the kingdom of Lahore.

Ranjit Singh rewarded Gulab Singh by appointing him Raja of his ancestral principality of Jammu and put the "Tilak" on his forehead with his own hand in 1822. Thus, after thirteen years of absence from Jammu, he returned to it as its ruler under Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Having thus secured a foothold in his ancestral home, he assiduously tried to extend his influence in the surrounding areas while serving Ranjit Singh whenever and wherever required. His interests at the court of the Lahore kingdom were well looked after by his younger brother, Raja Dhian Singh, who rose to be its Prime Minister.

As Raja of Jammu, Gulab Singh raised an army of his own which included such notable soldiers as Wazir Zorawar Singh. He conquered the Principalities of Bhimber, Rajouri, Bhadarwah and Kishtwar which extended the limits of his state to Rawalpindi in the west and border of Laddakh in the north-east. The valley of Kashmir which had been annexed by Ranjit Singh earlier was, however, ruled by a separate governor as a province of the Lahore kingdom and Gulab Singh had nothing to do with it.

In 1834, Gulab Singh Decided to extend his sway to Laddakh and Baltistan. He entrusted this job to Wazir Zorawar Singh who successfully led six expeditions into Laddakh between 1834 and 1841. Since Kashmir valley was not under Gulab Singh at that time, the route followed by Zorawar Singh was through Kishtwar, Padar and Zaskar. It was more difficult but much shorter than the route passing through Kashmir valley via Yojila pass.

After having conquered and added the kingdoms of Baltistan and Laddakh to the territories of Gulab Singh, Zorawar Singh decided to go forward and conquer Tibet. It was a most adventurous move. He left Leh with an army of about 5000 Dogras and Laddakhis in May 1841 with a pledge not to return to Leh till he had conquered Lhasa. After overcoming the Tibetan resistance at Rudok and Tashigong, he reached Minsar near lake Mansarover and the holy Kailash mountains. From there he advanced to Taklakot which was just about 15 miles from the borders of Nepal and Kumaon and built a fort there. Here he met two emissaries, one from the Maharaja of Nepal and the other from the British Governor of U.P., then called North-West Province. The British were not happy over Zorawar Singh's advance because they dreaded a direct link up of Lahore kingdom with the kingdom of Nepal. They had in fact been putting pressure on Lahore Darbar to press Gulab Singh to recall Zorawar Singh and vacate the Tibetan territory already occupied by him. Zorawar Singh was, however, blissfully ignorant of these moves. But an intense cold weather and the long distance from his base at Leh forced him to stop further advance and encamp at Taklakot for the winter.

In the meantime, the Lhasa authorities sent large reinforcements to meet him. On learning the approach of this new army from Lhasa, Zorawar Singh, intrepid and dashing as he was, decided to take the offensive against the advancing army instead of waiting for it to attack him. It was not a very correct decision. His supply position had become extremely bad and his Dogra soldiers had been reduced to sore straits by the intense cold. Many of them were frost-bitten and incapable of moving about. As a result the battle of Toyu, which was fought on the 11th and 12th December, 1841 at a height of about sixteen thousand feet above sea level proved disastrous for Zorawar Singh who died fighting. Dogra army like Napoleon's army in Russia, was destroyed more by cold than by the Tibetans.

The death of Zorawar Singh was a grave blow to Gulab Singh's prestige in Laddakh where people rose in rebellion aided and abetted by the advancing Tibetan army. A new army was then sent from Jammu under the command of Dewan Hari Chand which suppressed the rebellion and threw back the Tibetan army after inflicting a crushing defeat on it which convincingly avenged the defeat of Toyu. Thereupon the Tibetan Government approached for peace. A peace treaty was signed on the 2nd of Asuj, 1389 Vikrami (September, 1842) by Diwan Hari Chand and Wazir

Ratnu on behalf of Gulab Singh and Kalon Surkhan and Depon Pishy on behalf of Dalai Lama. By this treaty, the traditional boundary between Laddakh and Tibet 'as recognized by both sides since olden times,' was accepted as boundary between Jammu and Tibet. The village and area around Minsar near Mansarover lake which was held by the Rajas of Laddakh since 1583 was, however, retained by the Jammu government. The revenue from Minsar which lies hundreds of miles inside Tibet was being received by the Jammu and Kashmir Government regularly till 1948. This treaty of 1842 settled the boundary between Laddakh and Tibet in unequivocal terms leaving no cause for any kind of border dispute in this region.

While Zorawar Singh was making history in Laddakh and Tibet, the kingdom that Maharaja Ranjit Singh had built had fallen on evil days. Ranjit Singh died in 1839. His death was signal for the worst kind of anarchy and mutual killings in the history of the Punjab. The Sikh nobles who had been jealous of the ascendancy of the Dogra brothers in the Lahore Kingdom, now began to conspire against them with the help of Sher Singh who succeeded to the gaddi of Ranjit Singh after the death of Kharag Singh and his son Naunihal Singh in rapid succession. The situation was made much more difficult by the presence of British troops in Peshawar in terms of the Tripartite Treaty of 1838 by which Ranjit Singh had agreed to help the British to put Shah Shuja on the throne of Afghanistan. Gulab Singh was then at Peshawar to assist the British on behalf of the Lahore Durbar. The Muslim battalions of the Punjab army had refused to fight against the Muslim Afghans and had mutinied. The party in power at the Lahore court was, if not actually hostile, at least indifferent to the fate of the British troops still stranded in Afghanistan. Gulab Singh well understood the situation and proved very helpful to the British in terms of the Tripartite Treaty in getting them out of a difficult situation. The British felt gratified and at one stage actually proposed that he might be given possession of Peshawar and the valley of Jalalabad in return for Laddakh for the timely help rendered by him. But he refused the offer both on moral as well as practical grounds. Laddakh had been conquered by him through his own army and was contiguous to Jammu while Peshawar and Jalalabad would be too far removed from his ancestral base at Jammu. But the assistance he rendered created a high respect in the minds of the British for him and his Dogra army.

Things moved rapidly in Lahore after 1841. Both Dhian Singh, the ablest leader and Prime Minister of the Lahore Kingdom, and Suchet Singh were brutally murdered. Maharaja Sher Singh too was murdered and the infant Dalip Singh was put on the throne with a council of regency dominated by his mother Ranichand Kaur. Gulab Singh escaped because he kept away from Lahore most of the time. These murders of his brothers naturally left him cold toward the affairs of the Punjab and he began to concentrate on building his own power in Jammu. He took no part in the first Anglo-Sikh war which began in 1845. The Lahore Darbar wanted him to come down to Lahore and lead its armies. Had he agreed, it would have made a world of difference for both sides. His advice to the Council of Regency at Lahore to avoid war with the British was not heeded.

After the defeat of the Sikh army at Subraon in February 1846, peace negotiations were opened. Raja Gulab Singh was given full powers to negotiate on behalf of the Lahore Darbar. The British Government were well aware of the resourcefulness of Gulab Singh who was reported to have advised the Lahore Darbar to avoid pitched battles with the British and instead cross the Sutlej and attack Delhi with the help of some picked cavalry regiments. The British were, therefore, very anxious to secure his friendship. He was offered a bait that he would be recognized as an independent ruler of Jammu & Kashmir if he withdrew his support from the Lahore Darbar and made a separate deal with the British. Gulab Singh replied that he could not negotiate with the British about his own possessions while he was acting as an envoy for Dalip Singh, the king of Lahore. He continued the negotiations on behalf of the Lahore Darbar which culminated in the

Treaty of Lahore signed on 9 March, 1846.

According to this Treaty of Lahore it was agreed to by the Lahore Darbar to cede the territory between the Beas and the Sutlej to the British and pay 15 lakh pounds (Rs. One Crore Nanak Shahi) as war indemnity. Lal Singh, the then Prime Minister of the Lahore kingdom, had no love lost for Gulab Singh. He offered to the British the hill territories of the Lahore Kingdom including Jammu & Kashmir in lieu of the indemnity. His idea was "to deprive Gulab Singh of his territory and give the British the option either of holding Kashmir which would have been impossible at that time because of the long distance and intervening independent State of Punjab or to accept a reduced indemnity."² This offer, however, suited Gulab Singh. The original offer of making him an independent ruler of Jammu & Kashmir was revised. But now it was conditioned by his taking the responsibility of paying the indemnity which had been made a charge on this territory by the cleverness of Lal Singh.

Gulab Singh agreed to pay the money to the British and they recognized him as an independent sovereign.

Accordingly, a stipulation was made in the Treaty of Lahore by which Maharaja Dalip Singh of Lahore agreed to 'recognize the independent sovereignty of Raja Gulab Singh in such territories and districts in the hills as may be made over to the said Raja Gulab Singh by a separate agreement between him and the British Government.'

Seven days later, on the sixteenth of March, 1846, the Treaty of Amritsar was signed between Maharaja Gulab Singh and the British according to which Gulab Singh was recognized as an independent ruler of all the territories already in his possession together with the valley of Kashmir which until then formed a separate province of the Lahore Kingdom.

According to the Treaty of Amritsar, the British transferred for safe independent possession to Maharaja Gulab Singh and his heirs all the hilly and mountainous portions with its dependencies situated to the east of the river Indus and West of the river Ravi including Chamba and excluding Lahaul - being part of the territories ceded to the British Government by the Lahore Kingdom. In consideration for this Maharaja Gulab Singh was to pay to the British Rs. 75 Lakhs in cash.

There was stipulation in this Treaty about the British keeping a Resident or an army in Jammu & Kashmir. The Maharaja however, recognized the Supremacy of the British Government in token of which he was to present annually to the British Government one horse, 12 hill goats and 3 pairs of Kashmiri Shawls.

The amount to be paid was reduced to Rs. 75 lakhs from one crore because the British decided to retain in their own hands the territory between the Beas and the Ravi which includes the Kangra district of the Punjab because of the strategic value of Nurpur and Kangra forts. The territories of which Gulab Singh was thus recognized as an almost independent ruler also included the area between the Jhelum and the Indus in which Rawalpindi and Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan, are situated. Since this area was too far removed from Jammu, he approached the British to exchange it for certain plain area near Jammu. Thus the Jhelum instead of the Indus became the western border of this kingdom.

Kashmir valley was then controlled by Shaikh Imamuddin as Governor appointed by the Lahore Darbar. He was secretly instructed by Lal Singh not to hand over the possession of the valley to Gulab Singh. As a result he put up stiff resistance to the vanguard of Gulab Singh's army when it reached Kashmir to occupy the valley in terms of the Treaty of Amritsar. Wazir Lakhpat, one of his ablest generals, lost his life in this campaign. It was only after the British had put pressure on

Lahore Darbar and a new army was despatched to Kashmir that Gulab Singh could occupy the valley. Thus he obtained possession of Kashmir valley through the Treaty of Amritsar, made effective by force of arms.

After he occupied Kashmir, Col. Nathu Shah who controlled Gilgit on behalf of the Lahore Darbar transferred his allegiance to Gulab Singh who thus became master of Gilgit as well. Thus by 1850, Gulab Singh had become both de facto and de jure master of the whole of Jammu & Kashmir state including Jammu, Kashmir valley, Laddakh, Baltistan and Gilgit. The States of Hunza, Nagar and Ishkuman adjoining Sinkiang were added to the State by his son Ranbir Singh some years later. Some time later the ruler of Chitral also accepted suzerainty of Jammu & Kashmir. Chitral remained a feudotary of the Dogra Kingdom until 1947.

It is clear from the above account that Jammu & Kashmir State as at present constituted is the creation of Gulab Singh who welded together such diverse and far-flung areas as Jammu bordering on the Punjab, Laddakh bordering on Tibet and Gilgit bordering on Sinkiang, Afghanistan and USSR across the Pamirs.

It is wrong to describe the British grant of de jure recognition to him as master of Jammu & Kashmir as a sale deed. He was already in possession of most of this territory and would have fought for it if the British had tried to dispossess him. Actually the British had earlier offered him this territory even without payment of any money. He was forced to pay this money simply because of his own loyalty to the Lahore Darbar and the chicanery of Lal Singh.

Some writers have been very critical of Gulab Singh for not taking part in first Anglo-Sikh war of 1846 and for making a separate treaty with the British after the Treaty of Lahore under which the Lahore Darbar ceded the territories that were already in Gulab Singh's possession and Kashmir valley to the British in lieu of the war indemnity which it was not in a position to pay. This criticism is unjustified.

Gulab Singh cannot be blamed for keeping away from Lahore after the brutal murders of his brothers and nephew. He too might have met the same fate had he been in Lahore when Khalsa army went on the rampage. However, he was opposed to pitched battles with the British and had suggested attack on Delhi. His advice was not heeded. In the circumstances he could not be faulted for remaining aloof.

Jammu was his ancestral home. Other territories including Laddakh and Baltistan had been conquered by him with his own resources without any help from Lahore Darbar. As Governor of Peshawar and Commandant of Sikh forces in the first Anglo-Afghan war he had made his own assessment of the British. Developments in Lahore after the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1839 had convinced him that foreboding of Ranjit Singh that all territory will come under British away - "sab lal ho jayega" was coming true. Being a realist he decided to salvage as much of the Lahore kingdom as possible for himself. He was in a strong position. The British were not in a position to take on his Dogra armies at that time. They therefore, adopted a realistic course of accepting the de-facto position and get the indemnity money they needed so badly in the bargain. Gulab Singh got his de-facto position recognized by the wily British not by their grace but by pressure of the realities on the ground. Had he not been able to safeguard his possessions and get de jure recognition for them, Jammu, Kashmir, Laddakh, and Gilgit would have gone the way of Punjab and would have become ipso-facto parts of Pakistan in 1947.

It is, therefore, necessary that an objective assessment of Gulab Singh's achievements be made in the light of ground realities at that time. He was not only a great soldier but also a statesman. It is true that he was primarily concerned with his possessions and his interests. But what he achieved

had far reaching impact on the interests of Hindustan as a whole. His foresight and constructive statesmanship, therefore, deserve praise and not condemnation.

It is unfortunate that such writers have failed to give not only Gulab Singh what was his due but have also failed to give due praise to his general, Wazir Zorawar Singh, whose military campaigns in Laddakh and Tibet can be compared with the campaigns of Hannibal and Napoleon.

Zorawar Singh was one of the greatest military captains of the world. His prowess, quality of leadership and the strategy he adopted in his trans-Himalayan campaigns must be studied by the military leaders of free India with pride.

The events of circumstances leading to the creation of Jammu and Kashmir State as detailed above naturally made it a heterogeneous conglomeration of diverse and distinct areas devoid of any basic unity, geographical, social or cultural, except obedience to a common crown. Geographically it presented a delightful panorama of alluvial plains to the south of Jammu, obtained in return for the territory lying between the Jhelum and the Indus, melting into hills, hills melting into snowy mountains and mountains into high arid and wind swept plateaus of Laddakh and Baltistan with the vale of Kashmir as an emerald set in the centre inviting the wistful glances of all Asian neighbors.

A Conglomeration of Six Distinct Regions

Broadly speaking geography divides this State into the basin and catchment areas of three major rivers - the Chenab, the Jhelum and the Indus. The entire area from the Plains of Punjab to Panchal range of the Himalayas is drained by the Chenab. The valley of Kashmir and western districts of Mazaffarabad, Poonch and Mirpur form the basin of the Jhelum. The Indus drains the waters of Laddakh, Baltistan and Gilgit before turning south and cutting through the Himalayas to reach the Punjab plains.

From the linguistic and cultural point of view, this vast and varied state of 84471 sq. miles, bigger than many of the modern European States, whose only unity lay in a uniform and unified administrative system, could be divided into six distinct regions with distinct identities. A clear understanding of the historical and cultural background of these different peoples and regions and a proper appreciation of their economic, social and cultural moorings and political aspirations is essential for proper understanding and appraisal of the Kashmir problem.

Jammu

The first and the foremost part or region is "Dugar" better known as Jammu, the homeland of the founder of the State, as also of the Dogra people. It is directly contiguous to East Punjab and Himachal Pradesh in India and includes the entire districts of Jammu, Kathua, Udhampur including Bhadarwah and Kishtwar and the eastern parts of the erstwhile districts of Riasi and Mirpur of the administrative province of Jammu. It stretches from the Ravi in the east to roughly the cease- fire line in the west and from Suchetgarh in the south to the Banihal pass in the Pir Panchal range in the north. Its total area is about 12,000 sq. miles.

The inhabitants of this region are Dogras. Thousands of Kashmiris have also settled in the Ramban and Kishtwar areas. The Gujars, who speak a Pahari dialect, inhabit the western part of Riasi District. The total population of this region is about 30 Lakhs of which over 20 Lakh are Hindus. The spoken language of this region is Dogra which includes a number of Pahari dialects and is written in the Devnagari script.

The whole of this region is mountainous except for a narrow belt bordering on the Punjab. A few beautiful valleys like that of Bhadarwah, which is known as "miniature Kashmir," lie in its interior. The Chenab flows right through this region draining its waters and carrying its valuable timber wealth to Akhnur near Jammu before it enters the Punjab state of Pakistan. The chief occupations of its people are agriculture and soldiering. Thousands of hardy Dogras from this region serve in the Indian army. Maize and rice are the main agricultural crops. Lower Himalayan ranges traversing this region are covered with rich fir and deodar forests. Lumbering, therefore, is an important industry. Forest produce, lime, resin, honey, 'Rnardana' and medical herbs besides timber form the chief exports of this area. It is also the richest part of the state in respect of mineral wealth. Extensive deposits of coal, mica, iron and aluminium are known to exist in it.

Bhadarwah, which is now linked up with Chamba in the Himachal Pradesh and with Batote on the Jammu- Srinagar highway by motorable roads, is perhaps the most beautiful part of this region. Its fruits are superior even to those of Kashmir Valley and the natural scenery is no less charming. Kishtwar, which lies just to the north of Bhadarwah, is famous like Kashmir for its saffron fields. It forms a direct link between Dugar and Laddakh which lies to its north.

Politically, this area had remained divided into a number of small principalities ruled over by Hindu Rajas owing occasional and doubtful allegiance to the powerful empires rising in the plains till their unification into one compact whole by Raja Gulab Singh. Jammu is the chief town of this region and the winter capital of the whole state.

Socially, culturally, and economically the people of this region are indissolubly linked with the Dogras of East Punjab. In fact, the Dogra belt spread over Gurdaspur, and Hoshiarpur districts of East Punjab, Kangra, Chamba and Mandi districts of Himachal Pradesh, and the Dugar zone of the Jammu and Kashmir State forms a compact homeland of the Dogras. Naturally, therefore, the people of this region aspire to remain connected with India, irrespective of what happens to other parts of the State.

From the Indian point of view this is the most important part of Jammu and Kashmir State. It forms the only direct and feasible link between India and the rest of the State. The Pathankot-Jammu road and the Jammu- Banihal road that connect the rest of India with the Kashmir Valley pass entirely through this region. The choice of its inhabitants on the question of accession is beyond doubt. Its mineral and power resources are immense.

Laddakh

To the north-east of Dugar lies the extensive plateau of Laddakh. It is directly contiguous to Himachal Pradesh. It was being ruled over a local Buddhist Raja, Tradup Namgyal, when it was conquered by Wazir Zorawar Singh between 1834 and 1840 for his master Maharaja Gulab Singh. He entered Laddakh through Kishtwar in Dugar and not through Kashmir. Its total area is about 32,000 square miles and total population is about two lakhs, majority of which are Buddhists.

This is a very backward area. The inhabitants eke out a bare existence by rearing yaks and cultivating 'Girm,' a kind of barley, in the few high and dry valleys of the Indus. Their chief pre-occupation is their religion. They give their best in men and material to the numerous monasteries that act as an oasis in a veritable desert. The wealth, art and learning of the people is concentrated in these monasteries. Some of them contain rich collections of ancient Buddhist literature in Sanskrit or its translations in Tibetan. The population is kept down by social customs like polyandry and dedication of girls and boys to the monasteries and is being further reduced by slow conversion to Islam through inter-marriages with Balti and Kashmiri Muslims. The offspring

of these mixed marriages are known as "Arghuns." They form the trading community.

Leh, the chief town of this region, situated on the Indus at a height of more than 11,000 feet above sea level is one of the highest habitats in the world. It used to be the seat of the Raja of Laddakh before the Dogra conquest. After the conquest and formation of Laddakh district, it became the summer headquarters of the District Officer appointed by the State Government. It is now connected with Srinagar by a well-kept highway. It crosses the high mountains dividing Laddakh from Kashmir through the Yojila pass. Leh used to be, till a few decades back, a great mart for Central Asian trade. Caravans laden with silks, rugs and tea used to pour into Leh from distant Tashkand, Kashghar and Yarkand. These goods were exchanged here for sugar, cloth and other general merchandise from India. But since the absorption of these Central Asian states into empires of Russia and China, this trade has virtually stopped. But the strategic importance of Leh as a connecting link with Central Asia remains.

A part of Ladakh was over-run by the Pakistanis in 1947- 48, when, after capturing Askardu and Kargil, they began their advance on Leh. Several hundred innocent Buddhists were murdered and many monasteries were looted, despoiled and desecrated by the invaders. But the epoch - making landings of the I.A.F. Dakotas carrying the sinews of war on the improvised airfield of Leh at more than 11,000 feet above sea level and the brilliant winter offensive of the Indian army leading to the capture of the Yojila Pass and Kargil saved Leh and the rest of Laddakh from going the way of Gilgit and Baltistan.

Baltistan

The third distinct region of the State is Baltistan inhabited by the Balti people. It lies to the north of Kashmir and west of Laddakh. For administrative purposes, it was grouped with Laddakh to form the district of that name. Its total area is about 14,000 square miles and total population about 1,30,000 according to the 1941 census. Almost all of them are Muslims by religion.

Baltistan was conquered by Wazir Zorawar Singh along with Laddakh between 1834 and 1840. Before that it was being ruled over by petty Muslim Rajas of Laddakhi descent. The chief town of this region is Askardu which used to be the winter headquarters of the Laddakh district. Situated on the Indus like Leh, it has a fort of great natural strength.

Baltistan was overrun by Pakistani troops and Gilgit Scouts during the winter of 1947-48. The State garrison in the Askardu fort held on gallantly for some months. But no effective help could be sent to them from Kashmir because the Yojila pass had passed into the control of Pakistan and aid by air was made difficult by the enemy occupation of all possible airstrips.

The winter offensive of the Indian Army in 1948 succeeded in the recapture of the Yojila Pass and the town of Kargil beyond it, which commands the road to Leh and Askardu. Thus a part of Baltistan came back into Indian hands but its major portion including the town of Askardu still lies on the Pakistan side of the cease- fire line.

Baltistan is not of much economic or strategic importance. It is sandwiched between Laddakh and Gilgit. But it has provided Pakistan with a convenient route for advance toward Yojila Pass and Leh from its base in Gilgit. Its main produce are barley and fruits especially apricots. Some of the valleys of tributaries of the Indus in this zone are quite fertile. The people of this part of the State are very backward and till the time of Pak invasion of 1947, were quite indifferent to political developments in Kashmir and Jammu. But now they have been infected by Pakistani propaganda. Pakistan is known to have linked Askardu with Gilgit by a motorable road and has also built a big air base there. It is now the base of supply for Pak troops on the Siachin Glacier.

Gilgit

The fourth distinct region of the State is Gilgit. It includes the Gilgit district and feudatory states of Hunza, Nagar, Chillas, Punial, Ishkuman, Kuh and Ghizar. The total area of this region is about 16,000 square miles and the total population in 1941 was about 1,16,000. Almost all of them are shia Muslims. Most of them are followers of the Agha Khan. They belong to the Dardic race and are closely connected with the Chitralis in race, culture and language. Shina and Chitrali are the two languages spoken by them.

This region was conquered with great difficulty by Maharaja Gulab Singh and his son Maharaja Ranbir Singh between 1846 and 1860. Thousands of Dogra soldiers lost their lives in the campaign that led to the conquest of this inhospitable but strategically very important region. It is here that the three Empires, British, Chinese and Russian met. The independent Kingdom of Afghanistan also touches its boundaries.

The strategic importance of this region increased very much after the advent of air force and the expansion of the USSR and Communist China towards the Central Asian regions adjoining Gilgit and Baltistan. This region contains the fertile valley of the Gilgit river, a tributary of the Indus. The name of the entire region is derived from the name of this river.

Gilgit is divided from Kashmir by the same Himalayan range which divides Kashmir from Laddakh and Baltistan. But the direct and the shortest link between Gilgit and Kashmir is provided by another Pass, the Burzila. It is more than 13,000 feet about sea level and, therefore, remains closed for many months in the year. The access to Gilgit from Pakistan via Peshawar is comparatively easy.

The whole of Gilgit including the Burzila Pass now lies on the Pakistan side of the cease fire line. The state garrison as also the military governor appointed by the State were over-powered by Pakistani troops with the aid of the local militia, the Gilgit Scouts, during the winter of 1947. Gilgit has since been developed as a major military base by Pakistan.

From the economic point of view Gilgit is not rich though it has vast potentialities. Its climate is bracing and temperate. Temperate fruits like apple, apricot, and almonds grow in abundance. "Zira", (or cumin), a valuable spice, however, is the most valuable produce of this area and is exported in large quantities. The people are healthy and fair-colored. Polo is their national game in which they excel. They had come under Hindu and Buddhist cultural influence quite early. Gilgit probably formed a part of the Khotan Province in Ashoka's empire. A recent find of Buddhist and Sanskrit books near Gilgit confirms this view. A class of people among them is held in high esteem. They are expected not to eat beef and to remain clean. They were perhaps the Gilgiti Brahmins before their conversion to Islam.

Till 1947, these people were very much devoted to the Maharaja and his Government. They protested against the lease of Gilgit to the British. But after the partition, they, especially the Rajas of Munza and Nagar, were incited by the Pakistanis and the British Political Agent to press the Maharaja for accession to Pakistan. They later became collaborators of the Pakistanis and revolted against the Maharaja's government.

Punjabi Speaking Belt

The Punjabi speaking districts of Mirpur, Poonch and Mazaffarabad lying along the river Jhelum which forms the western boundary of the State, constitute the fifth district region of the State. Mirpur formed a part of the Jammu province, Muzaffarabad of Kashmir and Poonch was a big

"Jagir" ruled over by a descendant of Raja Dhian Singh, younger brother of Gulab Singh, who rose to be the Prime Minister of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The total area of this belt is about 6,000 square miles and total population about 11 lakh. Nearly a lakh of them were Hindus. They have been either killed or squeezed out by the local Muslims with the help of Pakistani invaders. The chief towns of this area are Mirpur, Poonch, which is still in Indian hands, and Muzaffarabad on the confluence of the Jhelum and the Krishna Ganga. This last town is now the headquarters of the so-called "Azad Kashmir" government. Mirpur and Poonch were conquered by Gulab Singh for Maharaja Ranjit Singh from the local Muslim Rajas. Muzaffarabad was acquired by him after he had occupied Kashmir by defeating its Muslim Sultan in a bloody battle.

Parts of this region are quite fertile. But the real importance of this region lies in its warlike manpower. Poonch area alone gave about sixty thousand recruits to the Indian army during the Second World War. The Sudhans, the Jarals and the Chibs who inhabit this area are Rajput converts to Islam. This area has an additional importance for Pakistan because the river Jhelum which carries the rich timber wealth of Kashmir and Karen forests flows through it. The headworks of the Upper Jhelum Canal at Mangla are situated near Mirpur in this zone. This region also links the West Punjab and the North-Western Frontier Province with the valley of Kashmir.

The people of this region are bound in bonds of common religion with those of Hazara, Rawalpindi and Jhelum districts of West Punjab. They actively sided with the Pakistani raiders when the latter invaded the State from that side. At present most of this region, except the towns of Poonch and Mendhar, lies on the Pakistan side of the cease-fire line which runs just three miles from the town of Poonch.

Kashmir Valley

In the centre of the State, surrounded by the diverse regions and peoples mentioned above and cut off from them by high Himalayan walls, lies the beautiful valley of Kashmir, the 'Nandan Vana' of India.

These geographical, and linguistic regions of the State provide the geo-political background of the Kashmir problem. The attitude of the people inhabiting these distinct regions toward the partition of India and the developments that have taken place since then, have their roots in hundred years of Dogra rule over this vast and heterogeneous state. A peep into these hundred years is therefore necessary for proper understanding of the genesis of Kashmir problem.

FOOTNOTE

2. Making of Kashmir State by K. M. Panikkar: pg. 98.

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The Storm Center of the World

Bal Raj Madhok

CHAPTER III

HUNDRED YEARS OF DOGRA RULE

The Dogra rule which lasted for exactly one hundred and one years from November 1846 to October 1947, was one of the most peaceful and progressive periods in the long history of the Kashmir valley and other constituent parts of the Jammu and Kashmir State. The credit for opening much of this far flung mountainous territory of snow covered peaks, deep ravines, extensive valleys and arid Himalayan plateaus to modern civilization and social and political influence, of which the present Kashmir problem is a direct result, goes to its Dogra rulers. The Kashmir valley which is the most celebrated and coveted part of the State is particularly indebted to them. They lavished their attention and resources on it even at the cost of their homeland - Jammu, in order to make it an attractive tourist resort.

The first task of Gulab Singh after having obtained de- jure possession of Kashmir and its surrounding territories was to consolidate them and give them an effective and efficient administration.

From the point of view of consolidation, Gilgit was the only area over which his grip was still not very firm. There took place a serious uprising in Gilgit in 1851 with the help of the Rajas of Yasin, Hunza and Nagar as a result of which the entire Dogra garrison there was cut to pieces. Only a Gurkha woman swam across the Indus to tell the story of this disaster. It was a great blow to the prestige of Gulab Singh who was then in failing health. For the time being he had to accept the Indus as frontier between his kingdom and Gilgit proper. Even though he could not recapture Gilgit in his lifetime, he laid the foundations of a sound and stable administration in the rest of his territories which enabled his son, Ranbir Singh, to reconquer Gilgit and its adjoining areas. He divided the State into two provinces, each under a Governor, and two frontier areas each under a 'Thanedar'.

Jammu Province covered the entire territory from the Ravi to the Jhelum lying south of the Pir Panchal range. It included the whole of Dugar region together with Mirpur area of the western Punjabi speaking belt.

Kashmir province included the whole of Kashmir valley and the western district of Muzaffarabad. The valley was divided into two districts - Anantnag which included the city of Srinagar and the strategic roads linking the valley with Jammu and Laddakh and Baramulla which covered north-western parts of the valley adjoining Muzaffarabad and Poonch. Srinagar was made the summer capital of the State; which until then was governed from Jammu.

The frontier region of Laddakh was put under the charge of a Thanedar. A number of efficient

and capable Thanedars like Magna, Mehta Basti Ram and Mehta Mangal gave modern administration to Laddakh for the first time. They built the fort and bazar of Leh, laid plantations for a perennial supply of fuel, built and repaired bridle roads linking Leh with Srinagar, Lahaul, Yarkand and Gartok, surveyed the traditional Laddakh-Tibet frontier and made a land settlement for the first time. Baltistan with its main town of Askardu was put under the charge of another Thanedar. Later, both Laddakh and Baltistan were joined together and put under the charge of one administrator who had his headquarters at Leh in summer and Askardu in Winter.

Gilgit area when reconquered in 1860 was made a separate administrative unit with its headquarters in the town of Gilgit. This administrative set up continued right until the end of Dogra rule in 1947.

As a compromise settlement with the Raja of Chamba who claimed Bhadarwah as a part of his possessions, he was allowed to transfer his allegiance to the British instead of the Dogra King in return for renunciation of any claim on Bhadarwah. No wonder that the people of Bhadarwah continue to yearn for reunion with Chamba through unification of Himachal Pradesh and Jammu region.

The British, as has been said above, handed over Kashmir to Gulab Singh in 1846 because they had no alternative at that time. But after the annexation of Punjab, a number of British officials began to have second thoughts regarding the Treaty of Amritsar. Pressure began to be put on Gulab Singh to accept a British Resident like other Indian States and give some other concessions to the British. But Gulab Singh took a firm stand on the Treaty of 1846 and refused to yield in the matter. The British though frustrated in their attempt continued to look for an opportunity to bring down Jammu and Kashmir to the level of other Indian States.

Maharaja Gulab Singh died in 1858 and was succeeded by Ranbir Singh whom he had installed on the throne with his own hands in 1856. He had himself functioned as Governor of Kashmir province during the last two years of his life.

Ranbir Singh

The most outstanding achievement of Ranbir Singh who is considered to be the greatest of the Dogra rulers, was the reconquest of Gilgit and subjugation of the frontier states of Hunza and Nagar. He organized a big expedition to which almost every Dogra family contributed a soldier in 1860 under the command of Colonel Devi Singh. It inflicted a crushing defeat on the recalcitrant Rajas and thus avenged the earlier Dogra defeat. Chitral also accepted his sovereignty in 1876.

After having thus re-established the prestige of the Dogra army, he turned his attention to internal reforms. The Ranbir 'Dand-Vidhi', the code of laws, both civil and criminal, which he got prepared, established his reputation as a law-giver. He reorganized his army on the European model but with Sanskrit terms of Command.

His spirit of independence and the originality and initiative he displayed in the organization of his civil and military administration were not to the liking of the British. They, therefore, made another attempt to force a British Resident on Jammu and Kashmir in 1873. But like Gulab Singh, Ranbir Singh too refused to yield in the matter on the plea that there was no provision in the Treaty of 1846 giving authority to the British Government to appoint a Resident.

The British felt very much chagrined and took resort to other methods for achieving their objective. Taking advantage of mutual bickerings between Pratap Singh, the eldest son of Ranbir Singh, and his two younger brothers, Ram Singh and Amar Singh, they made acceptance of a

British Resident a pre-condition for giving recognition to his successor after his death in 1885.

A major event of Maharaja Ranbir Singh's reign which could have changed the whole course of history of Kashmir was the collective approach of Kashmir Muslims to him for being taken back into the Hindu fold. They pleaded that they had been forcibly converted to Islam against their will and were longing to re-embrace their ancestral faith.

Ranbir Singh sought the guidance of Swamy Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of Arya Samaj, in the matter. Swami Dayand advised him that he could take them back in Hinduism after performing certain rites.

The proposed return of Kashmiri Muslims to their original faith was not to the liking of short sighted Kashmiri Pundits who were having a hey day since the return of Dogra Hindu rule. They tried to dissuade the Maharaja. When they found him adamant they took to a subterfuge. They filled some boats with stones and brought them midstream before Maharaja's palace on the Jhelum. They threatened him that they would commit suicide by drowning along with the sinking boats as a protest against his decision to take back Muslims into Hindu fold and that he would be then guilty of "Brahm Hatya" i.e. murder of Brahmins.

Ranbir Singh was a brave soldier. But he could not muster courage to face the crafty Brahmins, who were out to misinterpret the Vedic "dharma" for their selfish ends. The plan of return of Kashmiri Muslims to Hinduism thus fell through.

Later developments in Kashmir culminating in the en masse forced exodus of Kashmir pundits from the valley appears like the nemesis which has hit them for their un-Brahmin and myopic attitude at that crucial juncture of Kashmir's history.

Pratap Singh

Having got a Resident appointed which eventually brought down Jammu and Kashmir to the level of other Indian States like Hyderabad and Gwalior, the British now made a determined bid to have a more direct control over the State. The Maharaja was charged with conspiring with Russia against the British and was forced to hand over all his powers to a five members State Council which ran the administration under the guidance of the British Resident for many years. In the meantime, the British interest in the Pamirs and the frontier states of Chitral, Hunza was aroused by the continued advance of Czarist Russia in Central Asia. As a result, the British decided to have a more effective control over the Mehtar of Chitral. The military campaign launched for the purpose between 1889 and 1895 was conducted by the State forces but under the command of British officers. After the successful termination of the campaign, Chitral passed under direct control of the British in practice. But in theory it continued to be a feudatory of Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir.

This campaign brought the strategic importance of Gilgit region to the notice of the British. The publication of White's book "WHERE THREE EMPIRES MEET" which gave a graphic account of this campaign and the valor of Dogra troops put Gilgit on the map of the world. The result was a concerted effort on the part of the British Government to bring the whole of Gilgit area under its direct control. For the moment a British political agent was stationed at Gilgit to watch British interests though administrative control remained in the hands of the State Government.

Maharaja Pratap Singh got back full powers in 1905 after an attempt to completely oust him had been foiled by the timely revelation of the machinations of the Political Department of the British Government of India in the "AMRIT BAZAR PATRIKA" of Calcutta and raising of the issue in

the British House of Commons by some opposition members. He ruled for twenty years more till his death in 1925.

The modernization of Jammu and Kashmir State began during the reign of Pratap Singh. Kashmir was linked to Rawalpindi, Abbotabad and Sialkot by motorable roads, first rate Arts and Science Colleges were opened in Jammu and Srinagar, foreign administration was streamlined with the help of British experts, a hydro- electric plant, among the first few of its kind in India, was set up at Mehura near Baramula and new holiday resorts like Gulmarg and Pahalgam were developed in the Valley.

Hari Singh

This process of modernization of the State was accelerated by the succession to the throne of his young, intelligent but impulsive nephew, Maharaja Hari Singh in 1925. He had spent many years of his early life in England which had created in him a strong urge to develop and modernise his State, particularly the Kashmir Valley. This urge was partly the result of a new awareness in his mind about the importance of his State and a distrust of the British whose bullying attitude had Created a strong reaction in his young and self-conscious mind.

His misunderstanding with the British Resident began from the very day of his coronation and continued to grow in the succeeding years due to his spirit of independence. The breaking point, however was brought by his speech at the first Round Table Conference in London in 1930 in the course of which he said: "While Indian Princes valued British connection, they had full sympathy for the aspirations of their motherland for an equal and honorable place in the comity of nations." This outspoken support to the "Seditious" demand for independence by the foremost representative of Princely India, which had been given a disproportionately high representation at the Round Table Conference to counterbalance the popular representatives from British India, came as a bomb shell to the British diehards in England and the Political Department in India. The strategic importance of Jammu and Kashmir State and the British plan to have a more direct control over Gilgit made this spirit of independence and defiance in Hari Singh all the more galling to them, so they decided to break him. To that end they had recourse to the convenient method of building up popular "Muslim" pressure on communal basis. This led to the beginning of a socio-religious movement in the State which provided the religio- political background of the events which culminated in the emergence of the Kashmir problem in its present form.

The British aim was achieved. The Gilgit region was ceded to the British by the Maharaja on a sixty year lease in 1935. This brought the whole of Gilgit including the frontier States of Hunza and Nagar directly under the control of the British Political Agent stationed at Gilgit.

These political developments did not deter Hari Singh from pursuing his plans for the modernization of Kashmir valley in which he took a special pride. Apart from the meager resources of the State, he spent huge sums from his accumulated family treasures as well as his own privy purse to beautify the valley and equip it with modern amenities for Indian and foreign tourists. It would be no exaggeration to say that the modern embellishments which have made Kashmir valley such a rage with foreign tourists are mainly his contribution to this 'Paradise' on earth. Had he bestowed even a fraction of the interest and money he lavished on Kashmir valley on his own homeland of Jammu which also abounds in places of great natural beauty and is the richest part of the State from the point of view of human, forest and mineral resources, the present lop-sided importance of the valley which has diverted the attention of the people, both inside and outside India, as also of international forums like UNO from more important other regions of the state and aspirations and problems of their people.

Hari Singh had to leave the state in 1949 under pressure of the Government of India which was being blackmailed by Sheikh Abdullah. His son, Crown Prince Karan Singh was made constitutional head of the state - "Sadar - i - Riyasat" - under the new constitution of Jammu and Kashmir state. Hari Singh never looked back. He died in Bombay in 1961.

With Hari Singh ended the Dogra ruling dynasty as also the "House that Gulab Singh had built." Jammu and Kashmir States as it existed till 1947 has ceased to exist. It had been partitioned into Pak occupied areas and the areas under Indian control and may be further divided in the days to come.

The treatment that Maharaja Hari Singh, who was a real patriot, got from rulers of free India presents a poignant contrast with the treatment that they gave to Nizam Osman Ali of Hyderabad, a real traitor, who had waged war against India. This double standard and communal approach of Nehru Government played the most important negative role in creating and shaping Kashmir problem.

Judged by the standards accepted all over the world, Dogra rule over Jammu and Kashmir was much more secular than Abdullah rule that followed it.

The factors and forces which ended the Dogra rule over Jammu and Kashmir state and the rise of Kashmir problem are closely interlinked. These were part of the wide movement of national awakening and urge for freedom from foreign rule and the British reaction to it.

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The Storm Center of the World

Bal Raj Madhok

CHAPTER IV

POLITICAL RUMBLINGS

QUIT KASHMIR MOVEMENT

The forces and circumstances which ended the Dogra rule over Jammu and Kashmir and gave rise to the "Kashmir Problem" can be directly traced to the socio- political revolution that began to take shape in British India from the early years of the 20th century. The British rulers of India foresaw quite early the birth of national awakening of a different type than the one which had manifested itself in 1857, and formulated a set policy to checkmate it. It was thus enunciated by Sir John Stratchey, one of the ablest British administrators in India in 1874, "The existence side by side of these (Hindu and Muslim) hostile creeds is one of the strong points in our political position in India. The better classes of Mohammedans are a source of strength to us and not of weakness. They constitute a comparatively small but an energetic minority of the population whose political interests are identical with ours."

In pursuit of this policy, the British began to use the Muslims to further their own political ends and to counteract the national upsurge which had always been essentially Hindu in inspiration. The partition of Bengal in 1905, the command performance of Aga Khan deputation in 1906 and the subsequent formation of the Muslim League at Dacca and the introduction of separate electorates in 1909 were calculated steps in the pursuit of this set policy.

This British Policy got a momentary setback during the short-lived honeymoon between Khilafat movement, which aroused Pan-Islamic consciousness and extra - territorial loyalties of the Indian Muslims under the leadership of fundamentalists like Maulana Mohammad Ali, and the Indian National Congress under the mystical leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. But this marriage of convenience of the two incompatibles could not last long. The abolition of both Sultanate and Khilafat in Turkey by Kamal Ata Turk; enabled the British to divert against the infidel Hindus the religious frenzy aroused by the Khilafat Movement amongst the Muslims against the Christian Britishers. The bloody communal riots that followed in Malabar, Kohat, Multan, Saharanpur and many other places marked a convincing failure of the Gandhian experiment in communal harmony through appeasement of Muslims and success of the British policy.

The growth of aggressively communal Muslim separation in Indian politics that followed had its reverberations in the princely states as well. But as in British India, it needed support from British Political Department to find its feet there. Since Jammu and Kashmir State was a Muslim majority state under a Hindu Maharaja who was proving to be inconveniently independent and patriotic, the British decided to raise the Muslim bogey in his State to chastise him and bring him

to his knees.

This marked the extension of religio-political awakening and sectarian political organizations of British India into Jammu and Kashmir State. A clear grasp of the religio- political awakening in Jammu and Kashmir state, which took different shape and color in its different regions according to their socio-religious complexion, is essential for any scientific study of genesis of Kashmir problem.

Geographical barriers and socio-economic backwardness precluded the frontier area of Ladakh, Baltistan and Gilgit from being affected by the religio-political influences which began to enter the State from 1921 onward. They were shaken out of their blissful ignorance or indifference to developments in the rest of the State by Quit Kashmir movement of 1946 and shots and shells of Pakistani invaders in 1947-48.

Of the remaining three regions, Kashmir valley was the first to experience political activity. Mirpur, Muzaffarabad, and Poonch area followed the lead of Kashmir. The Dogra area of Jammu remained steeped in its sectional and factional politics till the revolutionary changes in the State's administrative and constitutional set up following the Pakistani invasion of Kashmir in 1947 forced its people to organize themselves politically and adjust themselves to the new order.

Broadly speaking, the political life in the Jammu and Kashmir State revolved around four organizations - The Muslim Conference, the National Conference, the Praja Parishad and Laddakh Buddhist Association.

Muslim Conference

The most important role in creating political awakening and turmoil in Jammu and Kashmir was played by Jammu and Kashmir Muslims Conference. The brain behind it was Sh. Mohammed Abdullah, who dominated the political scene in Kashmir till his death in 1982. He has given a graphic but subjective account of the political developments in Kashmir in his voluminous autobiography in Urdu - "Atish-i-Chinar." Like most other notable Kashmiris, Abdullah also was a scion of a Kashmiri Brahmin family of Srinagar whose head, Pt. Ragho Ram Kaul, was converted to Islam in 1766. His grandson, Ibrahim Sirad Abdullah was born in 1904. Manufacture and trading in shawls was his family profession.

Abdullah was put in a "Maktab" in 1909 where he got his first grounding in Islam. He got his early education at Srinagar and moved on to Lahore after passing FSE examination from Shri Pratap College, Srinagar.

He was deeply influenced by Islamic fundamentalism during his stay at Islamia college, Lahore, from where he passed B.Sc and Aligarh Muslim University from where he passed M.Sc in Chemistry in 1930. After returning to Srinagar he joined State High School as Science Teacher. But he was dismissed within a year for his subversive activities. This proved to be a blessing in disguise for him. The British Political Department and the British Resident in Srinagar who were annoyed with Maharaja Hari Singh for his patriotic speech at the Round Table Conference at London had already begun to fan discontent among the educated Muslims in Kashmir who till then had little share in the administration of the State. They found in Abdullah a ready made tool who could be projected as leader of the Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference formed in 1931 to institutionalize the agitation against the Maharaja and his government. The Muslim Press of Lahore, and Ahmadiya Jamat and Majlis Ahrar, two religio-political movements of Punjab, also gave him a helping hand in that formative period.

Quick rise of Abdullah can be ascribed to a number of factors. He was the first Kashmiri Muslim to get a post graduate degree in science. This gave him a special status among his people. His youthful looks, histrionic talents and command over Koran, which he recited in a melodious voice in all his public speeches added to his appeal. But his greatest asset was the support of the British Political Department, Muslim organizations and the press of Punjab which wanted to project him as leader of the Muslim majority in Kashmir.

Abdullah was an effective speaker in Kashmiri and Urdu and a good organizer. Muslim Conference soon became a mass organization under his leadership. The communal riot at Srinagar in July 1931, in which many Kashmiri Hindus were killed, women dishonored. Their property looted and burnt and some activists of Muslim Conference were also killed in police firing, proved to be a turning point in the politics of Kashmir and life of Abdullah. The Maharaja was unnerved. He appointed a commission to go into the causes of unrest and suggest remedies.

The report of Glancy commission proved a boon for Kashmiri Muslims. It gave them a number of concessions. The Maharaja also agreed to set up a legislative assembly - The Praja Sabha - and take some elected leaders into his council of ministers. This naturally gave a boost to Muslim Conference and Sh. Abdullah.

The British got the lease of Gilgit region for sixty years beginning from 1935 in the bargain. This made British de facto master of the tributary state of Hunza, Nagar and Chitral also. They raised a local militia - the Gilgit Scouts - to police the area.

National Conference

Sh. Abdullah converted Muslim Conference into National Conference in 1939. To be able to get support of the Indian Press and leadership in his struggle for power in Kashmir. Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan persuaded him to do so on the plea that with overwhelming majority of Muslims in Kashmir, political power, wherever and in whatever way it was transferred to popular hands, would come into his hands. As such, the change was more cosmetic than qualitative by opening the doors of Muslim Conference to Non-Muslims, Abdullah lost nothing but gained much; Kashmiri pundits joined it in good number.

But his colleagues of Hindu majority Jammu region and Punjabi speaking belt from Mirpur to Muzaffarabad refused to fall in line with him. They kept the Muslim Conference intact. It was led in Jammu by Ch. Ghulam Abbas. Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah kept it alive in the Kashmir valley.

The conversion of Muslim Conference into National Conference brought Sh. Abdullah on the national stage. He began to be lionised as "Sher-i-Kashmir" or, Tiger of Kashmir. He also became an important leader of the state's peoples conference, a front organization of the Indian or National Congress. Sardar Patel was the only congress leader of note who had reservations about the credentials, motivations and objectives of Sh. Abdullah.

The second world war and arrest of all top leaders of the Congress in the wake of the quit India Movement of 1942, gave a new turn to Kashmir's politics. The communist party of India, which began to support the British after German attack on Soviet Russia and Russian entry into the Anglo-American Camp. They began to take special interest in Kashmir. Many top communist leaders of Punjab like B.P.L. Bedi, his European wife Freda Bedi and comrade Dhanwantri came to have a good hold over Sh. Abdullah and his colleagues. Some of them like Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq, Mir Kasim and D.P. Dhar formed a group called "Friend of Soviet Union" and began to give pro-communist tilt to politics and policies of the National Conference.

The end of the second world war in 1945 victory of Labour Party in U.K. and beginning of the cold war between the two super powers - the USA and USSR - and their allies, gave a new turn to Indian politics as well. The Labor Government of Attlee was committed to transfer of power to Indian hands. Announcement about the visit of the cabinet mission to India in early 1946 to hold on the spot discussions with Indian leaders about transfer of power made this crystal clear.

Sh. Abdullah and his communist friends saw in this situation a new opportunity to fulfill their own dreams. Abdullah wanted to get control over Kashmir valley before the British left India for good. The communists wanted to make independent Kashmir a communist base which could serve as a jumping ground for a push forward into the rest of India in the days to come.

The cabinet mission included Lord Pethic Lawrence as leader and Mr. Horace Alexander and Sir Stafford Cripps as members. As it reached Delhi in early April, 1946, it made it clear that the British would quit India after an agreement was reached with the Congress and the Muslim League about the shape of free India.

According to the tentative plan it placed before Indian leaders for consideration, India was to be a federation in which the centre would have control over specific matters, including defense, foreign affairs and communications and the residual powers were to remain with the federating units.

It also stipulated sub-federations of Sindh, Punjab and NWFP. In the west, Assam, and Bengal in the east, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Central Province, Orissa, Bombay and Madras Presidencies to cover the rest of India. The idea was to create two Muslim majority and one Hindu majority blocks. The princely states were advised to join the new Indian Federation retaining the same powers as the federating provinces. The decision to join the federation or stay independent was to be left to their rulers.

Mr. Jinnah and the Muslim League endorsed the view that decision about joining the federation should be left to the rulers. But the Congress favored participation of the peoples of the respective states in decision making.

Sh. Abdullah wanted to strike before the plan was finalized and the British left. He therefore, visited Delhi, met Gandhiji and Congress president, Acharya Kripalani and sought their support for a mass movement to force the hands of the Maharaja to quit Kashmir and hand over power to the people. Both advised him against any such agitation at that juncture. But Abdullah and his communist friends had made up their mind to go ahead.

In the meantime, the cabinet mission decided to visit Kashmir. It reached Srinagar on April 19. Sh. Abdullah sent it a long telegram from Lahore in which he gave "clear indication of his intention to launch a movement to wrest power from the Maharaja". The gist of the telegram was: "The people of Kashmir do not only want responsible government. They want complete independence and end of personal rule of the Maharaja. Hundred years ago, the East India Co. had sold Kashmir for 75 lakhs to Gulab Singh. We challenge the moral and political basis of this "sale deed" miscalled "treaty of Amritsar" and do not accept the right of the ruler to rule over us any longer."

Quit Kashmir Movement

On reaching Srinagar, Sh. Abdullah made a public call to the Maharaja to quit Kashmir and exhorted his people to do everything possible to end the Dogra rule over Kashmir- His speeches were so fiery and virulent that the government had to order his arrest. He was arrested on May,

20.

It was followed by large scale violence and arson by the followers of Abdullah in the valley. Many key bridges were burnt down and government offices were attacked. Pt. Ram Chandra Kak, a Kashmiri himself, who had been appointed Prime Minister of the state by Hari Singh in 1945, came down on the agitators with a heavy hand. The movement died down within a short time.

But a new turn to the situation was given by Pt. Nehru who decided to visit Srinagar much against the advice of Gandhi and Sardar Patel. It would have been wise on the part of the state government to allow him to enter Kashmir and see for himself the devastation caused by violent "Mujahideens" of Abdullah. But Pt. Kak thought otherwise. He blocked entry of Pt. Nehru at Kehala bridge. When Nehru persisted, he was arrested on June 22, and kept in the Dak bungalow at Domel, near Muzaffarabad.

This arrest made Pt. Nehru, who was then tipped to be the head of the Interim Government to be formed at New Delhi, an inveterate enemy of Maharaja Hari Singh. Even though he returned to Delhi after two days on urgent summons from Gandhiji, he continued to nurse animus against Hari Singh until his death. The antipathy that began between Hari Singh and Jawaharlal with this unfortunate incident did more to create the problem of Kashmir than anything else.

Abdullah was tried by a special court under section 144 of the Ranbir Penal Code pertaining to armed rebellion and was sentenced to three years imprisonment. He was thus put out of the picture during the crucial period preceding partition and freedom of India in August, 1947.

The Quit Kashmir movement made the real intentions of Sh. Abdullah clear beyond any doubt. Two things became evident. 1. Sh. Abdullah was interested only in Kashmir valley. He had neither any interest nor any stake in the rest of the Jammu & Kashmir state. He built his whole case for quit Kashmir movement on the alleged sale of Kashmir to Maharaja Gulab Singh by the Treaty of Amritsar of March, 1946 for Rs. 75 lakhs. A perusal of the Treaty of Amritsar makes it clear that this money had nothing to do with Kashmir as such. It was the war indemnity which the British had demanded from Lahore Darbar which surrendered all the mountainous territory of Lahore Kingdom lying between the Ravi and the Indus in lieu of it.

2. Sh. Abdullah had no claim on the sympathy and support of the Indian National Congress and the people of India for this movement. He launched this movement against the advice of the Congress President, Acharya Kripalani and other Congress leaders. It had nothing to do with the Indian freedom movement against the British rule. In fact, he had not raised even a finger in support of the Quit India movement launched by the Congress in 1942.

These objectives of Sh. Abdullah for the achievement of which he launched the Quit Kashmir movement was an independent Kashmir valley under his tutelage. He was a protagonist of Kashmiri nationalism linked to Islamism. His model was Dr. Mohammad Iqbal, a scion of another Kashmiri Brahmin convert to Islam who propounded the ideology of Pakistan as early as 1930. It is, therefore, wrong to compare Quit Kashmir movement with the Quit India movement and link Abdullah's Kashmiri nationalism with Indian Nationalism.

The Quit Kashmir movement had very adverse reaction in Jammu and Laddakh. It alerted the Hindu majority of Jammu and Buddhist majority of Laddakh and gave rise to political moves with definite pro-India orientation in these two regions.

Jammu Praja Parishad

The Hindus of Jammu had no political organization worth the name until then. There was one Dogra Sabha. But it was primarily a socio-cultural organization. A branch of Hindu Mahasabha was started in Jammu in early thirties. But it never took root. A branch of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) was started there in 1940. It made steady progress and soon became a force to reckon with. It extended its activities to Kashmir valley also in 1944. But it claimed to be a non-political organization.

The most important Hindu leader in Jammu region was Pt. Prem Nath Dogra. A retired civilian and an elected member of the state Praja Sabha, he was appointed the "Sangh Chalak" of Jammu in 1942. As an enlightened and keen observer of the political scene he was quick to realize the implications of the Quit Kashmir movement for the future of Jammu. He therefore began to think seriously about forming a regional political party of Jammu. But, he could not take the initiative without a green signal from the RSS leadership at Nagpur.

Jammu, therefore, had no effective political party until Praja Parishad came into existence. The people of Jammu welcomed it enthusiastically. Praja Parishad soon became a force to reckon with in Jammu region. It was committed to full integration of the whole state with the rest of India and autonomy for Jammu Region.

Laddakh Buddhist Association

The Buddhists of Laddakh had been upset by inroads of Kashmiri Muslims who used to marry Buddhist women leading to rise of a mixed breed of Laddakhis who professed Islam, controlled trade and took active interest in conversion of Buddhist Laddakhis to Islam. They had formed a Socio-cultural organization under the name of Laddakh-Buddhist Association to safeguard Buddhist identity of Ladakh. Its leaders were quick to realize the dangerous implications of the Quit Kashmir movement and impending partition of India for the future of Laddakh.

The Laddakh Buddhist Association submitted a memorandum to Maharaja Hari Singh in 1947. It recalled the history of Laddakh, the basis of Laddakh's link with Jammu & Kashmir state and asserted that the Buddhist people would not like Laddakh to join Pakistan at any cost. They suggested that before taking any decision about accession of the state, the Maharaja should restore the freedom of Laddakh. In case, he acceded to India, Laddakh would like to be linked with the Hindu majority Jammu region; in any case it would not have anything to do with Kashmir valley.

Thus, the Quit Kashmir movement had deep impact on Laddakh and Jammu and laid the foundation of the movement for separating them from Kashmir.

In the meanwhile, things were moving fast both in London and Delhi. Failure of the Cabinet Mission Plan was followed by appointment of Lord Mountbatten as the Governor General of India. He put forth his plan of partition and freedom of India known as the "Mountbatten Plan" on June 3, 1947. It gave option to Princely States to join truncated India or Pakistan keeping in view their geographical contiguity. This plan put Jammu & Kashmir state in a difficult situation and put its ruler on the horns of a dilemma.

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CHAPTER V

HARI SINGH'S DILEMMA

The Mountbatten plan which propounded the scheme of partition and laid down the procedure to give effect to it, placed the Jammu and Kashmir State in a very difficult position. Though theoretically it conceded an independent status to all the states after the lapse of British paramountcy, it advised them in their own interest as also in the interest of the new dominions of India and Pakistan to join one or the other of them before 15th of August, the deadline for British withdrawal. The geographical contiguity was laid down as the main factor guiding their choice of the dominion for accession. For most of the states which were surrounded on all sides by Indian territory, the choice was obvious. But that was not the case with Jammu and Kashmir State which was geographically contiguous to both India and Pakistan. Some of its parts had close social and cultural ties with India while others had closer ties with would be Pakistan. The majority of its population taken as a whole was Muslim while the ruler was a Dogra Hindu. Its position, therefore, was very unenviable.

There were three courses open to the state. It could accede to India or to Pakistan or remain independent. Mr Jinnah claimed Kashmir for Pakistan on the ground of its being a Muslim majority state contiguous to Pakistan. In fact he was so confident about it that he told a deputation of the Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference that "Kashmir is in my pocket".

Indian leaders were naturally interested in retaining Jammu & Kashmir in India. But instead of basing their claim on the natural ground of its being an integral part of India which could not be effected by the partition agreement which concerned only British India, they banked on the support of the Kashmiri Muslim followers of Sheikh Abdullah who held the balance between the Hindus who wanted the state to accede to India and the supporters and followers of the Muslim Conference who preferred Pakistan. Therefore they, especially Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, wanted to appease Sheikh Abdullah by putting him in power before accepting the accession of Jammu and Kashmir so that India could be sure of the support of Sheikh Abdullah and his Muslim followers. This stand of the Congress leaders was in keeping with their declared policy that the decision about accession should ultimately rest with the people and not with the rulers of the States.

This put Maharaja Hari Singh on the horns of a dilemma. He did not want to accede to Pakistan. His preference was definitely for India. But the condition of putting Sheikh Abdullah in power before accession of his State to India could be accepted was unpalatable to him. Sheikh Abdullah had made no secret of his hostility to the person and Government of the Maharaja. He and his National Conference wanted him to quit Kashmir bag and baggage before they could give their opinion about accession authoritatively. Accession to India, therefore, meant to him a sort of voluntary abdication of his authority over Kashmir without any definite guarantee that Sheikh

Abdullah and his followers would support the accession of the State to India even after obtaining full power. On the other hand, the Pakistan Government began to offer him alluring terms if he acceded to Pakistan. The Maharaja was therefore, between the devil and the deep sea. Accession to India meant immediate transfer of power to Sheikh Abdullah without any definite guarantee about the future of the State.

His sentiments and patriotism stood in the way of accession to Pakistan. So he deferred decision.

The fact that under notional division of Punjab the district of Gurdaspur including the rail head of Pathankot, which provided the only road link between Jammu and East Punjab, had been included in West Pakistan added to Maharaja's difficulties in making up his mind. By delaying the announcement of the Radcliff Award, which awarded Gurdaspur and Pathankot, to India, by two days - the Award was made public on 16th instead of 14th of August - Lord Mountbatten too contributed to Maharaja's indecision.

Actually Lord Mountbatten far from being neutral in the matter of accession of Jammu & Kashmir State to India or Pakistan wanted the Maharaja to accede to Pakistan. The Maharaja lacked courage to resist his pressure. This added to his indecision.

As time passed the third course of remaining independent began to appeal to him. His Prime Minister, Pt. Ram Chander Kak, was an enthusiastic supporter of this idea. The author discussed the question at length with him. He argued that Jammu and Kashmir being a Muslim majority state, Pakistan had a logical claim to it on the basis on which India was going to be partitioned. Accession to India, he said, would be resented by Pakistan and there would be trouble in Muslim majority parts of the State. Accession to India would mean putting Sheikh Abdullah in power. He doubted Sheikh Abdullah's bonafides and sincerity. On his assertion being challenged he warmed up and said, "I too am a Kashmiri. I know Sheikh Abdullah too well. His past antecedents and present politics if studied realistically cannot warrant any other conclusion."

All this sounded quite plausible. But what he would not explain convincingly was the way the independent status of Kashmir was to be maintained in face of a hostile Pakistan and an indifferent India. His plea was that Jammu & Kashmir should remain independent for some years until India became strong and her leaders more realistic in their policies. That he thought, would be the time to accede to India. But the weight of these arguments was taken away by his close association with enemies of India like Nawab of Bhopal whose Home Minister, Shoaib Qureshi, frequently visited Srinagar as his guest in those days. The author pointed out to him that the example of independent Kashmir would strengthen the separatist and Pakistani elements in Bhopal and Hyderabad. But his personal ambition and distrust of Pt. Nehru stood in the way of his appreciating this point of view. He was, however, not able to get much support from the Hindus of the State for this policy of independence. But the Muslim Conference, strangely enough, supported this move. Maybe, it wanted to prevent Kashmir from acceding to India until Pakistan became free from internal problems created by partition and could turn her attention to Kashmir.

The net result of this conflict and confusion in the mind of the Maharaja and his Prime Minister was that Jammu & Kashmir State had not decided about accession until the eve of the partition day. The dismissal of Pt. Ram Chandra Kak on August 10, did create some hope of immediate accession to India. But it remained unfulfilled. The Maharaja and his advisers failed to take the decision even then. At the eleventh hour they decided to send telegraphic requests to Mr. Jinnah and Lord Mountbatten for Stand - Still Agreements. Jinnah at once accepted the request and a Stand Still Agreement with Pakistan was signed. But the Indian Government started protracted negotiations which remained incomplete until the date of Pakistani invasion.

Pakistan could not remain content with a stand-still agreement, but it removed her anxiety about immediate accession of the State to India for she was not in a position just then to exert her full pressure. It gave her time to strangle Kashmir economically and militarily before delivering the final blow.

This failure of the Kashmir State to accede before the 15th of August is responsible for much of the tragic drama that has been enacted there since then. There can be no doubt that accession of the State to India before that fateful date would have simplified the issue. Most of the pro-Pakistan Muslims of the State would have surely gone over to Pakistan and their place might have been taken by the Hindu refugees from the adjoining areas of West Punjab and North Western Frontier Province. Such a development, would have been in line with what happened in the princely States of Punjab and Rajasthan and would have been taken as the natural result of the unnatural partition of the country. Actually lakhs of Hindus passed through Jammu & Kashmir territories during their forced exodus from West Pakistan to East Punjab. Many of them, particularly those from the districts of Hazara, Rawalpindi and Peshawar, were keen on settling in the Kashmir valley because of its climatic affinity and geographical proximity to their home districts.

That would have put the seal of finality on the resultant alignment and there might have been no Kashmir problem which has been plaguing Indo-Pak relations ever since. But that was not to be.

It has become customary to put the blame for the failure of Jammu & Kashmir State to accede to India in time on Maharaja Hari Singh and this Kashmiri Prime Minister, Pt. Kak. That is only partly true. It must be admitted that the Maharaja had genuine difficulties which could not be wished. His Prime Minister Pt. Kak had his own ambitions and fears. He was convinced that accession to India so long as Pt. Nehru was Prime Minister at New Delhi would mean transfer of power to Sheikh Abdullah and his own exile into wilderness. Furthermore, he was under concerted pressure from British die-hards and the rulers and premiers of States like Bhopal and Travancore which were then toying with the idea of independence. The unique geo-political situation of Jammu & Kashmir made it an ideal state to give the lead to other princely states in asserting their independence which would have led to Balkanisation of India as desired by the hostile British officials and politicians. His British wife and her British relations who then occupied high civil and military posts in the State might also have exerted their influence in the same direction.

But it would be wrong to give too much importance to Pt. Kak in the matter. He was after all a servant and not the master of the Maharaja. His influence and advice proved effective only because the Maharaja's own mind was also conditioned that way. He had a strong feeling that Pt. Nehru, wanted to humiliate him by forcing him to submit to Sheikh Abdullah about whose bonafides he had strong and valid doubts. Sh. Abdullah banked on Pt. Nehru to secure power for himself.

Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru was interested in securing Kashmir's accession to India because of his emotional attachment with it as his ancestral homeland. But he had pinned his hopes on Sh. Abdullah for whom he had developed a strange infatuation rather than on the Maharaja. He had nothing but contempt and hatred for the Maharaja and his Prime Minister, Pt. Kak, who had the temerity to order his arrest on the eve of his appointment of head of the Interim Government in 1946. Vindictive by nature, he was more keen on humiliating the Maharaja than on understanding his point of view, giving him friendly and sympathetic guidance and helping him in arriving at a positive decision.

Had Sardar Patel, who as States Minister had persuaded hundreds of Princes to accede to India

before 15th August inspite of the machinations of the British Political Department and subtle pressure from Mr. Jinnah through his declaration that the Muslim League would respect the independence of the states. He might have allayed the fears of the Maharaja and persuaded him to accede in time. But since Pt. Nehru claimed to be a specialist on Kashmir, he did not like anybody else in his party and the Government to interfere with it. The Sardar therefore could not take that personal interest which marked his handling of other princely states. The Maharaja was obsessed by the fear that in respect of Jammu & Kashmir only Pt. Nehru's will would prevail. Thus the issue of accession of Jammu & Kashmir to India was made more difficult and complicated by the inter play of personal factors. The obsessive interest of Pt. Nehru in Kashmir and Sh. Abdullah, which was more subjective than objective, contributed more than any other factor in the decision of Hari Singh. His dilemma was ultimately resolved by the rulers of Pakistan.

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CHAPTER VI

ACCESSION TO INDIA

Role Of Pakistan, R.S.S. & Sheikh Abdullah

The geo-political, religious and personal factors discussed in earlier chapters had made Jammu and Kashmir a part in the five hundred and odd Princely States that dotted the map of united India before it was divided into Hindu India and Muslim India (Pakistan) on August 15, 1947 by the British on the basis of two nation theory propounded by the Indian Muslim League and implicitly accepted by the Indian National Congress. With the exit of the British, all these states became independent theoretically. But almost all of them had acceded to India or Pakistan in terms of the Mountbatten Plan by August 15. Jammu & Kashmir was the only exception. Its ruler approached both India and Pakistan for a Stand Still Agreement. Pakistan readily agreed. But India procrastinated.

Pakistan formally came into existence on August 14, when its flag was raised at Karachi. Since the post and telegraph offices in Jammu & Kashmir state came under Sialkot circle, Pak flag was hoisted on post offices of the state. This created the impression that the state had acceded to Pakistan. But raising of Pak flags came as a shock to the Hindus. Hindu students at Srinagar left their schools and colleges in protest and Pak flags were pulled down. The Maharaja's Government protested to Pakistan for what was described as a hasty action. This gave a clear indication that Maharaja Hari Singh had set his face against accession of his state to Pakistan.

The announcement of the Radcliffe Award on August 16 which gave part of Gurdaspur district lying to the East of the Ravi including the rail head of Pathankot, to India, removed a major hurdle in the way of accession of the state to India. This made rulers of Pakistan and pro-Pakistan elements in the state restive. They began to devise other means and methods for bringing the state into Pakistan.

Immediate concern of Pakistan, however, was N.W.F.P. which was under a Congress government led by Dr. Khan Sahib. Khan brothers and their followers were opposed to Pakistan. They had been put in a difficult situation by partition because N.W.F.P. had no direct link with India. A circuitous link with India could have been forged if Jammu & Kashmir had acceded to India. There were, therefore, some discrete suggestions to Maharaja from some Paktoon leaders for an early accession to India. Pakistan, therefore, wanted to tackle N.W.F.P. first. The decision about referendum in N.W.F.P. proved helpful to it because the choice given to the people was limited to accession to India or Pakistan. The demand for a third choice of independent Paktoonistan was not accepted. The Congress party led by the Khan brothers, therefore, boycotted the referendum.

As a result the referendum's verdict went in favour of Pakistan. There after the Khan Sahib Government at Peshawar was dismissed. A Muslim League government led by Abdul Qayyum Khan, a Pakistani of Kashmiri origin, was installed. The Khan brothers were put in jail. This acted as a damper on pro-India elements among Kashmiri Muslims and gave new impetus to pro-Pak elements.

Pakistan now decided to put concerted pressure on the Maharaja to accede to Pakistan. A three-fold plan was made for the purpose. It included economic blockade, stepping up of pro-Pak propaganda among Muslim population and officials in the state to prepare them for a stir from within and armed raids into the Western districts of the State from without. Side by side, preparations began to be made in tribal areas and districts adjoining Jammu & Kashmir state for a direct assault, if necessary, at the appointed time.

Economic blockade was quite easy. Though contiguous to both the Dominions, all the main arteries of trade between the State and the outside world passed through Pakistan- Jammu was linked by rail and road with Sialkot and Srinagar was linked with Rawalpindi and Abbottabad by all-weather motorable roads. Most of the import and export trade of the State passed through these channels. All the necessities of life like salt, soap, sugar, cloth, food-grain, gasoline and kerosene oil meant for Kashmir State used to be stocked in the markets of Rawalpindi and Sialkot from where they were sent to Jammu and Kashmir in trucks. The Pakistan Government stopped the movement of these goods into the State. The rail link with Jammu was cut-off. All the engines, bogies and the Muslim staff on the intermediary stations were removed to Pakistan leaving the Hindu staff to fend for itself. This naturally caused great hardship to the public and the State Government. Even the supplies for which payment had already been made were not delivered. Stoppage of the supply of the gasoline affected internal transport as well as military movements. The State Government protested against this breach of the Stand-Still agreement but to no avail. Even the trucks sent from Srinagar to fetch the supplies were confiscated by the Pakistani authorities.

Along with this economic blockade a virulent Pakistani propaganda offensive was launched. Parties of students of Islamia College Lahore and Aligarh Muslim University began to tour villages in the interior. The Muslim officials of the State and the Muslim personnel of the State police and armed forces were completely won over. Adalat Khan, began to work actively for insurrection from within. Others like Mian Abdul Rashid, Senior Superintendent of Police in Jammu, Ch. Faiz Ullah, District officer of Baramulla, and many others began to incite the civil population. Arms and ammunition began to be smuggled in large quantities from Pakistan into the State. Regular training in the use of firearms began to be given in the mosques at Jammu, Srinagar and elsewhere.

To disperse the State troops over large areas, raids were organized all along the western border especially in the Poonch area. The local Muslims were also incited to rise in rebellion in Poonch and Bagh areas.

These developments aroused the Maharaja out of his complacency. But it was too late. Thakur Janak Singh, on whom premiership had been thrust after Pt. Kak's dismissal, was too old and timid to initiate and carry out any policy at all. No Indian statesman wanted to risk his reputation by taking over the charge of the State as its Prime Minister at such a critical time. Continued absence of the National Conference leaders then in jail, had left the field free for the Muslim Conference whose followers were aggressively pro-Pakistan.

The developing situation compelled the Maharaja to release Shaikh Abdullah and his associates from jail so that they might counteract the growing influence of the Muslim Conference. Mr.

Justice Mehar Chand Mahajan was persuaded to become the head of the State administration and help it in weathering the storm that had already gathered. He took over as Prime Minister on October 15.

The release of Sheikh Abdullah and the appointment of Mr. Mehar Chand Mahajan to the premiership came as a shock to the Pakistanis, inside and outside the State. The leaders of Pakistan knew Mr. Mehar Chand Mahaja too well to underestimate his strength and capacity. They did not want to give him time to prepare to meet projected Pak attack.

Meharchand Mahajan who enjoyed the confidence of Sardar Patel had been briefed before he left for Srinagar about the latest intelligence reports about Pak preparation for armed attack on the State to force the Maharaja to accede to Pakistan. He had therefore no misconception about the seriousness of the situation and intentions of Pakistan. Among the first things he did after assuming office was to speed up negotiations with Government of India for supply of arms and ammunitions for the state army. He also got in touch with me to seek the support of R.S.S. workers in the task of defence of Srinagar and preservation of internal peace. I was no stranger to him as I was working as Head of History Department and Vice Principal of the local D.A.V. College. Justice Mahajan was the Chairman of the managing society run by the D.A.V. colleges. I was also Chief of the R.S.S. set up in the valley at that time. I assured him that he could bank on unstinted support and cooperation of R.S.S. in the arduous task before him.

Role of Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh (R.S.S.)

Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh played an important role in Kashmir in that crucial period. I had started a branch of R.S.S. in Jammu in 1940. I was then studying at Lahore. By the time I passed M.A. in History and returned to Jammu and Kashmir State, in 1942, the R.S.S. had picked up in Jammu City under the guidance of Pt. Prem Nath Dogra who had been appointed "Sangh Chalak" for Jammu. Within a couple of years of my taking charge, the network of R.S.S. branches was spread all over the Jammu region. In 1944, I moved to Srinagar Where I joined the local D.A.V. college as lecturer in history. This helped me to get in touch with the Kashmiri youth. Hundreds of Kashmiri Hindu youth began to attend R.S.S. branches daily. With the arrival of Hindu refugees from Peshawar, Rawalpindi, Abbotabad and other adjoining districts of west Punjab, the number of R.S.S. workers in Srinagar began to swell because some of them had been active workers of R.S.S. in their home districts.

R.C. Kak, the Kashmiri Prime Minister of the State was, as stated earlier, keen to enlist the support of R.S.S. for his plan for independence for the states. But I made it clear to him that R.S.S. was for accession of the State to India because it was convinced that the best interests of the nation demanded so.

I was conscious of the hurdles in the way of immediate accession of the state to India. I also knew about the growing opinion even in National conference circles in favor of accession of the State to Pakistan. It was, therefore of utmost importance that the Maharaja was given right and objective advice to resolve his dilemma. To that end I submitted him a memorandum giving the pros and cons of the options. Accession to India, accession to Pakistan and staying independent - before him. The memorandum tried to impress upon him, that in spite of personal hostility of Pt. Nehru the wider national interests as also the best interests of the state demanded that he should opt for accession to India.

DevanBadri Das a leading jurist of Punjab, who was also Sangh Chalak of R.S.S. for Punjab, was held in high esteem by Maharaja Hari Singh. R.S.S. leadership requested him to visit Srinagar and meet the Maharaja to persuade him to accede to India at the earliest. On october 5, the R.S.S.

supreme, M.S. Golwalkar, himself came to Srinagar and had a long meeting with the Maharaja. He was known to have advised Hari Singh that any further delay in the matter of accession to India could be dangerous for him and the country.

But what really clinched the issues was the unfolding of Pak plan of invasion of Kashmir. Its rumblings had been heard by some observers of the Pak scene. But Maharaja Hari Singh and Hindus of the state were blissfully ignorant about it. R.S.S. played a major role in gathering information about the plan of invasion and forewarning the state Government about it. The first clue regarding the projected invasion came from Dr. S.K. Atri, a medico from U.P., who had been practising at Srinagar for over two decades. His clinic was situated just on the Southern end of Amira Kadal bridge on the Jehlum. As I crossed the bridge on October 8, on my way to my college, Dr. Atri called me into his clinic. He told me that some of his elderly Muslim clients had visited him last night and requested him to leave Srinagar with family at the earliest because Pakistan would be invading Kashmir soon and no Hindu would be safe after that. He had no doubt about the sincerity of the persons who had met him because they had a sense of gratitude toward him. This information was too serious to be ignored. I discussed it with my top workers the same night and deputed some workers from Rawalpindi who could mix with Punjabi Muslims with ease to go to Punjab Muslim Hotel at Pratap Chawk now called Lal Chawk, which was known to be the rendezvous of Pak spies and agents to dig out the truth. They accomplished their mission within two days. The information supplied by a Muslim Officer of the State army was really alarming. The invasion was to be launched from Abbotabad side on October 21. The Muslim officers and men of the state army were to join the invaders. Srinagar was to be captured by October 25, so that Jinnah might celebrate Id-ul-Zuha at Srinagar. An attempt was also to be made on the life of the Maharaja on October 24, when he was expected to go in procession to Batmalu ground for the Vyaya Dashmi Celebrations. A similar game plan had been prepared for Jammu also.

After getting this information we passed it on to the Maharaja and Brigadier Kashmir Singh, the Chief of the staff of the state army.

Later on the night of October 23, when Pak invaders were advancing fast toward Srinagar the Maharaja called me at dead of night to his palace and requested me to defend Srinagar city till Indian troops reached Srinagar. He asked for two hundred volunteers for the purpose. I mobilized the required number of volunteers the same night. They were taken to the Badami Bagh cantonment on the morning of 24th, given preliminary training in using fire arms and were put on duty the same evening.

I have the satisfaction that the workers of the R.S.S. and myself did our duty toward our motherland in those difficult days. This factual account should put the record straight about the role of R.S.S. in defense and accession of Jammu & Kashmir state to India.

The Jammu & Kashmir Government had no knowledge until then of this planned massive invasion from Abbotabad side. Its hands were full with Pakistani raids in the Poonch area which had become a major threat to the security of the State. The stoppage of all supplies including gasoline by Pakistan had created a very serious situation in regard to internal mobility of the limited defense forces which were dispersed over a long frontier.

While trying to cope with the situation as best as it could, the State Government tried to persuade Pakistan through diplomatic channels to honor its commitments under the Stand-Still Agreement. Failing to get a positive response to its numerous communications Prime Minister Mahajan sent a rather strongly worded telegram to the Governor General of Pakistan, Mr. Jinnah on October 18, 1947. In the concluding part of this telegram Mr. Mahajan said:

"Finally, the Kashmir Government wishes to make it plain that it is not possible to tolerate this attitude any longer without grave consequences to life and property of the people which it is bound to defend at all costs. The Government even now hopes that you would personally look into the matter and put a stop to all the iniquities which are being perpetrated. If unfortunately this request is not heeded the Government would be justified in asking for friendly assistance and oppose trespass on its fundamental rights."

A cable was sent on the same day to the Prime Minister of U.K. apprising him of the situation, created by the influx of armed Pakistanis into Poonch area of the State and stoppage of all supplies. It added: "The policy of the Government has been to afford protection to the Muslim refugees about 100,000 of whom have been given safe conduct to their new abodes in Pakistan. On the other hand, a party of 200 State subjects sent from Rawalpindi at the request of the State has practically been wiped out and no non-Muslim from the State can pass through Pakistan. Railway service from Sialkot to Jammu has been stopped since August 15, without any reason. Protests only elicit promises which are never implemented. As a result of the obvious connivance of Pakistan Government the whole of the border from Gurdaspur side up to Gilgit is threatened with invasion which has actually begun in Poonch. It is requested that the Dominion of Pakistan may be advised to deal fairly with Jammu & Kashmir State and adopt a course of conduct which may be consistent with the good name and prestige of the Commonwealth of which it claims to be a member".

The Governor General of Pakistan in his reply sent to the Maharaja of Kashmir on October 20, took no notice of the allegations made by Kashmir Government and instead made counter charges of repression by Dogra troops. But to lull the state Government into complacency it repeated an earlier suggestion made by it about a meeting of the representatives of the two governments to settle outstanding questions at an early date. Mr. Khurshid, then private secretary of Mr. Jinnah was sent to Srinagar for the purpose.

While this exchange of telegrams was going on, preparations were afoot at Abbotabad for a large scale invasion of Kashmir. A large number of soldiers and officers of the Pakistan army 'on leave' were deputed to organize and assist about five thousand tribals that had been assembled there in the name of Jihad or holy war. The invasion was to be led by Major General Akbar Khan of the Pakistan army who was given the name General Tariq after the name of the Islamic Arab conqueror of Egypt.

As if to create an excuse of the personnel of regular Pakistan army taking part in the invasion a telegram was sent by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan to the Prime Minister of Jammu & Kashmir on the October 21, which said, "Serious anxiety regarding the Safety of their families are being felt by Pakistan military personnel whom it is exceedingly difficult to reassure in absence of any clear reports or assurances by you."

Before a reply to this telegram sent by the Prime Minister of Kashmir on October 22, reached the Pakistan Foreign office, the massive Pakistani invasion of Kashmir had begun.

The Invasion

The tribal hordes armed and supported by the Pakistan Government and led by officers of the Pakistan army that entered the State from Hazara district in the N.W.F.P. along the Abbotabad - Muzaffarabad - Domel- Srinagar road on October 21, formed the spearhead of the final and the biggest blow of Pakistan to the State. Its objective was Kashmir valley and the capital city of Srinagar. Almost simultaneously new thrusts were made all along the Kashmir - Pakistan border including Gilgit. These other thrusts did not get much publicity because they were directed

against comparatively little known though strategically equally important parts of the State. They ultimately succeeded in gaining their objective in Gilgit, and the western districts of the State. But their master plan to occupy Srinagar and Jammu simultaneously and present the world with a fait-accompli before any outside help could come to the State was foiled by the timely arrival of air-borne Indian troops in Srinagar and by the popular resistance put up by the people of Jammu.

In order to appreciate the magnitude of the threat and the success it achieved, one should have a clear picture of the situation on the ground. The Kashmir-Pakistan frontier is over 500 miles long, a major portion of which is quite ill-defined. Beginning from near Pathankot it runs along the districts of Sialkot, Gujrat and Jehlam of the West Punjab; then turning North it runs along the Jehlam up to Kohala at which point that river leaves the State to form its western boundary. From Kohala onward this frontier runs along the Hazara district of the North Western Frontier Province, and then touches the tribal area of Yagistan and the frontier state of Chitral, which had already acceded to Pakistan.

During the British regime the State had not to worry about this long frontier. The prestige of Dogra arms established by Maharaja Gulab Singh coupled with British protection was enough to keep in check the turbulent elements within and without the State. The defense of the Northern frontier of the State used to be a joint responsibility of the British and the State troops stationed in the Gilgit cantonment. The ruler of Chitral owed allegiance to the Maharaja of Kashmir as well but with the disappearance of the protecting hand of the British and the establishment of a hostile and aggressive state like Pakistan along this long frontier, the problem of defense was bound to become difficult for Jammu & Kashmir.

The situation was made all the more difficult by the nature and affinities of the people inhabiting both sides of the Western frontier. The people of Mirpur-Poonch area belong to the warlike Rajput and Jat tribes. They have close social, economic and religious ties with the inhabitants of the adjoining districts of Jehlam, Rawalpindi and Hazara in Pakistan. They had been converted to Islam during the Mughal times. Many of them wanted to be reconverted to Hinduism during the twenties of the present century. But the conservatism of Brahmins and Hindu Rajputs did not allow such efforts to succeed. During the thirties they came under the influence of the Muslim Conference. The politics of the adjoining districts of Jehlam and Rawalpindi also began to influence them. The result was that most of them became supporters of Pakistan after its establishment. Many of them being ex-service men possessed fire arms and were adept in their use. It was, therefore, easy for the Pakistani agents to instigate them to rebel against the authority of the State.

The armed forces of the State which had to defend this long frontier, as also to meet the threat of internal uprisings were quite inadequate to meet the situation. The strength of the State Army was nine infantry battalions, two mountain batteries and one cavalry squadron. The two mountain batteries were retained by the British Indian Government after the end of the Second World War because they had given a very good account of themselves during the war. Of the infantry battalions three the 2nd, 4th, and 6th J & K infantries, were mixed- half Hindu Dogras and half Muslims from Mirpur and Poonch areas. These battalions had been spread all along the frontier. At the time of invasion the mixed 4th battalion was in charge of the Muzaffarabad-Konala sector, the 2nd of a part of Mirpur-Poonch sector and the 6th had been ordered to proceed to Gilgit to assist Brigadier Ghansara Singh who was appointed military Governor of that region after the withdrawal of the British Srinagar cantonment. At the time of invasion he had only one company of the 4th infantry battalion besides the Maharaja's personal guards.

The State troops were efficient and brave. But they were ill-equipped. Even the quota of arms and ammunition allotted to the State had not been obtained in full for the last two years prior to

the invasion. The Pakistan Government had withheld all supplies meant for the State forces after the partition. The Indian Government which had been approached for arms and ammunition had agreed to supply them, but none had been sent until the fateful day of invasion. To crown it all, the loyalty of the Muslim personnel of the armed forces was doubtful. Information was received about plans of sabotage and desertion prepared by Muslim officers of the State army in collaboration with Pakistan authorities. Their names had been supplied to the Maharaja and he had been requested to disarm and disband them in the interests of the security of the State. But the State Government did not, perhaps could not do this because it had no reserves and they feared mutiny. Colonel Narain Singh who commanded the 4th Battalion in charge of Kohala Muzaffarabad sector was, however, warned to remain alert and careful about the Muslim personnel. But Narain Singh, who had commanded that battalion in the Burma campaign, expressed his full faith in his Muslim soldiers and officers. He had to pay a heavy price for this self-complacency and credulity.

In view of these circumstances the rapid advance of the Pakistani hordes after they had once broken through the outer defenses should cause no surprise. Their main column, entered the State in the dead of night between 21st & 22nd of October, 1947. The Muslim personnel of the State pickets joined hands with them. They killed their Hindu comrades in their own tents and began to lead the convoy of trucks supplied by the Pakistan Government for carrying the invaders. They occupied the strategic Krishanganga bridge without much difficulty and entered the town of Muzaffarabad without firing a shot. The district officer Mr. Mehta was taken by surprise in his own house and shot dead in the presence of his wife and children for refusing to shout "Pakistan Zindabad". A few of them simultaneously crossed over to Domel, the confluence of the Jehlam and the Krishanganga, through a suspension bridge. The Muslim pickets there joined hands with them and Colonel Narain Singh was shot dead in his own tent by his own Muslim sentinel in the early hours of the 22nd morning. The occupation of Domel brought both the roads leading to Srinagar from Rawalpindi and Abbottabad under the control of the invaders, securing their supply lines.

The road to Srinagar now lay open. The garrisons guarding the Kohala bridge found itself sandwiched between the hostile forces from across the bridge; those coming from Domel side made a hasty retreat toward Poonch. It succeeded however, in taking with it about ten thousand Hindus and Sikhs living in the Bagh area to Poonch town in safety.

The Gallant Brigadier

The raiders occupied Garhi the same day and started their advance toward Uri on 23rd. The few retreating Dogra troops resisted them at every step. But the odds against the defenders were heavy. Brigadier Rajendra Singh, then came forward to command the troops in person. He had orders from the Maharaja to fight till the last man to defend a bridge near Uri and stop the advance of the enemy.

Brigadier Rajendra Singh rose to the occasion and maintained the prestige of Dogra troops. He stemmed the tide of enemy advance near Uri for two days. But some of the raiders led by the Muslim soldiers of the State army managed to out-flank the Dogra troops. They were able to put the Mahura power-house, which Supplies electricity to Srinagar, out of order on the night of the 24th, and then attacked the State troops led by Raiendra Singh from behind. Rajendra Singh, like a gallant soldier that he was, fought the enemy to the bitter-end. He and all his 150 men were cut to pieces in this action. But they will live in history like the gallant Leonides and his 300 men who held the Persian invader at Thermopylae.

The leaders of the National Conference were in a fix, they could not depend on their followers,

once the Pakistani invaders moved. They could turn Muslim Leaguers overnight. The Sheikh had already sent his family to Indore for safety. He himself slipped away to Delhi.

Before taking any action on the Maharaja's requests for help the Government of India decided to send its Secretary to the Ministry of States, Mr. V.P. Menon, to get first hand information. He flew to Srinagar on the 25th of October. He soon realized the desperateness of the situation. The invaders after overcoming the gallant resistance of Brigadier Rajendra Singh had reached Baramulla, the district headquarters at the entrance of the valley, where they were welcomed by Ch. Faiz Ullah, the Deputy Commissioner of the district, who was in turn appointed governor of the area by the invaders. Had they continued their advance they could have reached Srinagar in 24 hours. Mr. Menon, therefore, advised the Maharaja to leave immediately for Jammu to be out of reach of the Pakistani invaders. This was timely and correct advice because the aid could be sent from India only after the Maharaja had acceded to India by signing the instrument of accession. That he could not have done, if he had fallen in the hands of Pakistani invaders.

The Maharaja left Srinagar for Jammu that very night and Mr. Menon and the Kashmir Premier, Mr. Mahajan, flew to New Delhi. The Maharaja's departure for Jammu on the advice of Mr. Menon who spoke for the Government of India, was later exploited by Sheikh Abdullah who declared that the Maharaja had run away and that he had 'Picked the crown of Kashmir from dust'- What was worse, Pt. Nehru who was supposed to know the true facts also repeated the same allegation against the Maharaja to lower him in the estimation of his own people and add grist to the anti-Maharaja campaign of Sh. Abdullah. That also proved his personal vendetta against the Maharaja.

Accession To India

On receiving the report from Mr. Menon the Government Of India felt inclined to go to the rescue of the state. But it was felt that formal accession of the State must take place before any help could be sent. So Mr. Menon flew back to Jammu with the Instrument of Accession. He woke up the Maharaja who was fast asleep after a night-long drive from Srinagar. Mr. Menon has recorded in his famous book 'Integration of States' that before going to sleep the Maharaja has left instructions with his A.D.C. that "If I (Menon) came back from Delhi, he was not to be disturbed as it would mean that the Government of India had decided to come to his rescue and he should therefore be allowed to sleep in peace, but that if I failed to return, that meant everything was lost, in that case in A.D.C. was to shoot him in his sleep".

The Maharaja at once signed the Instrument of Accession and also handed over a letter for Lord Mountbatten, the Governor General of India informing him that it was his intention to set up an interim government at once and to ask Sheikh Abdullah to carry the responsibilities in the emergency with Mr. Mehar Chand Mahajan, his Prime Minister. It was out of sheer patriotism and solicitude for the safety of his people that the Maharaja agreed to Submit to this pre-condition of the Indian Prime Minister.

Pakistan thus played a major role in resolving the dilemma of Hari Singh and bringing about accession of Jammu and Kashmir state to India.

Sardar Patel who in his anxiety for the State had been waiting at the aerodrome for Mr. Menon to return, was not prepared to go all out to save the State. But Pt. Nehru and Lord Mountbatten were hesitant. It was not before Mr. Mahajan, who knew that every minute counted if about a lakh of Hindus in Srinagar were to be saved from total annihilation, threatened to proceed to Karachi and surrender Kashmir to Mr. Jinnah to secure safety of its people that Pt. Nehru's reluctance could be overcome.

While these hurried discussions were going on in Delhi on that fateful Sunday, the people of Srinagar were hanging between life and death. The report of Maharaja's departure for Jammu and the invader's occupation of Baramula spread like wild fire in the whole city casting gloom of death on all Hindus and an air of jubilant expectation in pro-Pakistan circles. All ears were turned to the radios and all eyes toward the sky to hear the news of acceptance of accession and see the arrival of aid which could only come by air. But instead of news of help from Delhi reports began to spread that tribal raiders had been seen on the outskirts of the city. That was a signal for pro-Pakistan slogans. Stray looting of Hindu shops began.

Just then news reached that accession had been accepted and that the Indian help will not take long in coming. Mr. G.C. Bali, the Police Chief, immediately made this fact known to the people of Srinagar by the beat of drum and warned the pro-Pakistan elements of dire consequences if they started trouble. It had quite a salutary effect and the 26th of October passed off peacefully.

Had Pakistani invaders marched into the city that Sunday everything would have been lost. Not a single Hindu would have survived. The author himself was in Srinagar that day. But fate conspired otherwise. The tribal hordes which had come more out of lure for loot and women than for anything else found the autumn atmosphere and beautiful landscape of Baramula together with rich prospects of loot and rape too absorbing to remember Mr. Jinnah's resolve to celebrate Id, which fell on October 25, in Srinagar. They converted every mosque and house in Baramula into a brothel and entertained themselves to their hearts content. Even the European nuns of the local mission hospital could not escape their bestiality.

As a result the Indian airborne troops when they flew into the valley in the morning of October 27 found that the Srinagar aerodrome was still safe. It was not to fall in the hands of the invaders and Kashmir was to be saved. It was saved.

Kashmir Saved

The "Operation Kashmir" and the lightning speed and efficiency with which it was conducted saved Kashmir from the ruthless Pakistan tribal-cum-regular army marauders. It will ever remain a glorious chapter in the annals of the Indian troops. It was in a way unprecedented in the history of warfare. Lord Mounthatten who had been Chief of Combined Operations and Supreme Allied Commander South East Asia in the Second world war testified that in all his war experience he had never heard of an air lift of this nature being put into operation at such a short notice.

But the success of this air lift and the subsequent action in Kashmir was made possible by one basic fact of the failure of the invading hordes to capture the Srinagar aerodrome. This was mainly due to the dogged resistance of the Dogra troops who had been fighting against very heavy odds. Deserted and betrayed by their own Muslim comrades in arms, who acted as vanguard of the invading army, the Dogra troops had to literally fight for every inch to gain time for the expected succor to reach Srinagar before everything was lost. The example set by Brigadier Rajendra Singh who will go down in the history of India as a great military hero, inspired everyone of them. They were still holding the main enemy column at Pattan, seventeen miles from Srinagar, when the first Indian troops landed at Srinagar. They, therefore, in a way played the most decisive role in saving Kashmir and checkmating the Pakistani design of presenting the world with a fait accompli.

The Dogras thus vindicated themselves and their ruler in the eyes of history. Those who had ruled the valley for one hundred years did not leave it to the vultures as a dead corpse. They defended it with their own blood. But for their dogged resistance, Kashmir valley would have been lost. So

the highest honors for saving Kashmir must go to these gallant Dogra troops.

It is, however, equally true that but for the timely arrival of Indian troops on October 27, and the immediate relief they provided to the Dogra troops, the enemy would have entered Srinagar in the course of the day and achieved his objective.

The first Indian troops to land at Srinagar came from Sikh unit commanded by Colonel Ranjit Rai. The people of Srinagar who had been gazing at the sky for hours in expectation of the air lift planes were thrilled by the sight of Dakota after Dakota suddenly emerging from behind the snow covered Panchal range. It was comparable to the thrill created in French hearts by the emergence of Allied planes from the horizon over the French sky on the D-day in 1944.

No sooner did the first Dakota land than the troops jumped into the trucks that were standing by and moved on to the front line. The author wanted to stop these troops near his residence for small refreshments. His request was met by a loud and heart warning cry of 'Sat Siri Akal' and the curt reply: "Do not detain us. We will quench our thirst with the blood of the enemy".

Within hours they went into action and before the day was out Colonel Ranjit Rai lay dead in defense of Kashmir which had by now become an integral part of India, legally and constitutionally, as a result of acceptance of accession of the State by the Government of India. The next important casualty was Major Sharma who died defending the aerodrome against an enemy column which was approaching it from behind along the foothills of Gulmarg.

Mr. Jinnah who had come down to Lahore to proceed to Srinagar as a victor was terribly upset by the report that India had accepted the accession of Jammu and Kashmir and that Indian troops had landed at Srinagar. He immediately summoned General Gracey, the C-in- C of Pakistan army, and ordered him to rush regular troops to Kashmir. But General Gracey expressed his inability to carry out his instructions without the approval of the supreme commander, Field Marshal Auchinlek, who was supervising the partition of the army and its stores between the two Dominions. Field Marshal Auchinlek who reached Lahore on the 28th of October informed Mr. Jinnah that in view of Jammu & Kashmir state having legally acceded to India the British officers of the Pakistan army will have to withdraw if he ordered a regular invasion of Kashmir. This forced Mr. Jinnah to relent. Thus the immediate danger of a full scale war between India and Pakistan which would not have remained confined to Jammu & Kashmir, was averted.

But short of throwing regular Pakistan Army into action everything possible was done to strengthen and reinforce the invading hordes who were well equipped with arms and stores supplied by the Pakistan Government. Therefore, the Indian troops had quite a tough job to do in the beginning. The enemy was able to get local support wherever it reached. The only notable exception was Maqbool Sherwani of Baramula who refused to line up with the invaders and was therefore shot dead.

But the tide turned with the arrival of more troops and armored cars, Baramula was recaptured on the 8th of November. This removed the threat of further incursions into the valley because Baramula commanded the entrance to it. A few days later Uri was recaptured and a column was sent from there to relieve Poonch which had been besieged by the enemy. But this column could not reach Poonch because of destruction of a strategic bridge by the Dogra troops who thought that the enemy and not friendly troops were advancing from Uri.

The recapture of Baramula and Uri demoralized the stray detachments of the invaders still in the valley. They withdrew from Gulmarg and Tanmarga without firing a shot. Thus by the middle of November, 1947, the Valley proper was cleared of Pakistani invaders.

Baramula, Sopore and the Western fringe of the valley along the Gulmarg sector of Pir Panchal range were the only parts of the valley which came under the effective control of Pakistan for a few days. The rest of the valley, particularly its southern and south eastern part which is directly contiguous to Jammu and Laddakh regions of the State, remained untouched by the invaders- An attempt was later made by them to break into the valley through the old Mughal route which would have brought them to Shupian and enabled them to cut the Banihal road. That would have proved a grievous blow because Banihal road is the only motorable link between Srinagar and Jammu. But they were intercepted and pushed back by the Indian troops after bitter fighting near Nandi-margi, over 10,000 feet above sea level.

Liberation of Kashmir by the Indian army thus supplemented the legal right of India over Kashmir valley attained through the lawful accession of the state. In doing so it had to undergo a lot of suffering and make heavy sacrifices in the blood of Jawans drawn from all over India. This fact needs to be kept in mind when looking at the Kashmir problem which mainly revolves round the valley.

Role of Sh. Abdullah

The facts given above do not point to any worth mentioning role of Sh. Abdullah in the defense of the valley. But most of the books written on the subject have projected Sh. Abdullah as the real savior of Kashmir. This depiction of his role is fraudulent. It amounts to deliberate distortion of facts and history to serve partisan ends. Therefore the record needs to be put straight.

Sh. Abdullah, as has been made clear in the earlier chapters was interested only in Kashmir valley. His one ambition was to become master and arbiter of Kashmir. He had neither any interest nor any stake in other parts of that far flung Kingdom.

His attitudes about accession to India or Pakistan was also guided by this one over-riding ambition and consideration. As a realist he knew that his followers were emotionally inclined toward Pakistan. As an Islamic fundamentalist his own intuitive sympathy was for Pakistan. The whole tenor and tone of his autobiography points to his aversion for Hindus and Hindu majority part of the State. All through his biography, he has referred to Anantnag, the district headquarters of southern part of Kashmir valley as Islamabad. His admiration for Dr. Iqbal - the father of the idea of Pakistan is writ large over 1,000 pages of "Atish-i-Chinar."

But experience of Khan brothers of N.W.F.P. and his own experience during his struggle against the Maharaja had made him sceptical about his own future in the case of accession of the state to Pakistan. He wanted assurance from Jinnah that he would be made master of Kashmir valley. Jinnah was not prepared to give that assurance. Emissaries sent by him to Pakistan in early October to secure such an assurance had returned empty handed. Jinnah was reported to have told them that Kashmir was going to fall in his lap like a ripe apple in any case.

Abdullah has himself given a vivid account of the talks he had with two representatives of Pakistan, Dr. Mohammed Din Tashir and Sheikh Sadiq Hassan, President of Punjab Muslim League, who visited Srinagar on the eve of Pak aggression. They tried to persuade him to put his might for accession of the state to Pakistan. Instead of giving a clear reply he equivocated. He wanted a clear assurance for himself before taking any positive decision in favor of accession to Pakistan. Both of them invited him to visit Lahore and have direct talks with Mr. Jinnah. He accepted the invitation.

But before going to Pakistan he had to go to Delhi to preside over State's People's Conference of which he had been elected President. He was in Delhi when Pak attack on Kashmir began on

October 21. He addressed press conference at Delhi on October 21, in which he blamed the Maharaja's Government for repression in Poonch, but did not say a word against Pak raiders who had created insurgency there.

On his own admission he was in Delhi on October 25-26 when Meharchand Mahajan reached there to plead for immediate acceptance of accession and despatch of Indian troops to save Srinagar from falling into the hands of invaders. There is no authentic information about his whereabouts on October 22 to 24. Even if he had returned to Kashmir he must have maintained a studied silence. As a man on the spot who was constantly moving in Srinagar to keep up the morale of the beleaguered Hindus. I did not notice his presence at all. National conference workers came out on the streets only after information about acceptance of accession and imminent arrival of Indian troops reached Srinagar in the afternoon, October 26.



Sheikh Abdullah



Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru

Sh. Abdullah was at Pt. Nehru residence at New Delhi on October 26 when a crucial meeting about accession was held there. He did not take part in the meeting, but overheard what transpired in it from a side room. He was, however, known to have endorsed the statement of Meharchand Mahajan about need for immediate accession when Pt. Nehru got non-plussed by plain speaking by Mahajan about his orders to go to Karachi and surrender Kashmir to Jinnah on condition of safety of the Hindus if India was not prepared to accept the accession there and then. Abdullah's endorsement might have had some effect on Pt. Nehru. It is however utterly wrong to say that accession took place because of his efforts. The decision to accede to India was an independent decision of the patriotic Maharaja and was accepted by the Indian cabinet which gave greater might to the words of Sardar Patel in spite of hesitancy of Pt. Nehru.

The truth is that Sh. Abdullah and his followers never played any role in the defense of Kashmir in those five crucial days nor had he any significant role or say in the matter of accession of the State to India though he became the main beneficiary of it.

So called secularism of Sh. Abdullah and his followers would have been put to real test if Pakistani invaders had been able to enter Srinagar before the entry of Indian troops. There is no doubt in my mind that no Hindu, including myself, would have been left alive to testify to the much trumpeted secularism of Sh. Abdullah and his followers. Maqbool Sherwani of Baramulla was the only Kashmiri Muslim at that time who can be called a real nationalist.

Kashmir valley was saved from Pakistan marauders by the gallantry of Dogra troops, vigilance of R.S.S. workers and other nationalist elements, decision by the Maharaja to accede to India and

timely arrival of Indian troops. They were the real saviors of Kashmir and not Sh. Abdullah and his double faced followers.

Accession of the Jammu and Kashmir state to India and liberation of Pak occupied areas of Kashmir valley by air borne Indian troops was a great victory for India and its armed forces. That should have set at rest the doubt and uncertainty about future dispensation of Jammu and Kashmir state as an integral part of India.

But that was not to be. Dishonesty of Sh. Abdullah and blunders and bunglings of Nehru who considered Kashmir as his domestic domain, soon clouded the achievements of the armed forces and created a situation of neither victory nor defeat. This state of affairs has lingered on to this day.

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The Storm Center of the World

Bal Raj Madhok

CHAPTER VII

FIRST INDO-PAK WAR

Fall Of Mirpur, Gilgit And Baltistan

Accptance of the offer of accession made by Maharaja Hari Singh by the Government of India on October 26, 1947 made that state as a whole an integral part of India, its long border touching Pakistan, Afghanistan, China, and Tibet became the border of India and its defence became the responsibility of the Government of India. Therefore, Pak aggression against the state that began on October 21st, became aggression against India and marked the beginning of the first Indo-Pak war.

This development was not surprising or unexpected. I had predicted it on August 15 itself. I was taking my B.A. History class under the shade of a Chinar tree on the bank of the Jehlum that day. Students were more interested to know about my assessment of partition of united India and future relations between the two new dominions than a routine lecture. I had then told my students that the artificial partition of what God and nature had made one country could not last long. But so long as Pakistan will exist, it will remain hostile to India and a war between the two dominions will be inevitable. But, even I had never expected the war to come so soon.

Pakistan wanted to grab Jammu & Kashmir through a swift and camouflaged action. Its leaders banked on indecisiveness of Pandit Nehru and split mind of Sh. Abdullah. But they counted without Sardar Patel and underestimated Hari Singh.

As stated earlier, Indian army acquitted itself, admirably. It was able to clear the Kashmir valley of the enemy by November 8, when Baramullah was liberated. Thus the battle for the Kashmir valley was virtually over in less than a fortnight.

The real brunt of Pak aggression was borne by parts of Jammu province particularly its western Muslim majority district of Mirpur and trans-Himalayan regions of Gilgit, Baltistan and Laddakh.

The Pak plan was to capture cities of Srinagar and Jammu about the same time, snap all links between them and other parts of the state and present the world with a fait accompli in regard to the whole state. Pakistan had considered its task in Jammu to be comparatively easy because of proximity of this part of the state to Pakistan and almost complete allegiance of its Muslim population to its ideology.

Its plan in regard to the predominantly Hindu eastern part of this province, including the city of Jammu which had a large Muslim population, was to foment trouble from within and send armed

raiders from outside at the opportune moment. Jammu city being only 20 miles from Sialkot Cantonment the plan was considered to be quite workable. In pursuance of this plan, arms and ammunitions were smuggled into Jammu in large quantities to equip the local Muslims. Trouble from within was to be started approximately at the same time as the invasion of Kashmir. The signal was to be given by Pakistani raids on the border villages.

The signal was given by the middle of October when the border villages of Alla and Charwah were raided, many persons killed and many Dogra women kidnapped. The Dogras of Jammu who had come to know of Pakistan's plans became alert by these raids on their border villages. They, therefore, forestalled the Pakistanis inside the city as well as outside it. Taken aback by this sudden turn of events the Muslims vacated the city and made a hurried retreat to Pakistan. Some of them were killed in the encounters that took place in the city as also in other parts of the province. Huge quantities of arms and ammunition as well as wireless transmitters found from the houses of Muslim evacuees in Jammu left little doubt that any slackness on the part of the people of Jammu at that critical moment would have spelled disaster for them.

This failure of Pakistan's plan in regard to Jammu contributed a good deal toward the defense of Kashmir. The Dogra part of Jammu forms the only direct link between India on the one side and Kashmir valley and other parts of the State on the other. The vital Pathankot-Jammu-Srinagar road passes through this region up to the Banihal Pass. Had the Pakistanis succeeded in capturing Jammu, the only supply line to Kashmir would have been cut off and military aid to save Kashmir would have become impossible.

The situation in the Punjabi-speaking western districts of Mirpur and Poonch including Bhimber and Rajauri was different. This is a predominantly Muslim area. About a lakh of Hindus, who were less than 10 per cent of the total population of this region, constituted the business community though some of them tilled the soil as well. They were spread over the whole of this area. But the main centers of their concentration were the towns of Poonch, Kitli, Mirpur, Bhimber and Rajauri. The Muslim inhabitants of this area, who are mostly illiterate but warlike, economically depended on the Hindu population to a large extent. The relations with the Hindus were, therefore, generally good. But being closely connected with the Muslims of the adjoining districts of Gujarat, Jehlum and Rawalpindi in West Punjab, they had come under the influence of Pakistan ideology. It appealed especially to the upper and martial classes among them who had economic interests in Pakistan or depended for their living on service in that segment of the armed forces of undivided India which had opted for Pakistan.

The State Government was aware of the dangerous potentialities of this area if its people, of whom about a lakh were demobilized ex-soldiers, ever took it into their heads to rebel against their king. So a large part of the state forces was concentrated in the area as also along its border adjoining Pakistan. The State also depends upon the loyalty of elderly Muslim Rajput chiefs and Jagirdars of this area who had still close social relations with the Hindu Rajputs of their respective tribes and looked upon the Rajput Maharaja as their natural leader.

Rulers of Pakistan, therefore, knew that it was not easy to instigate rebellion from within. Therefore the plan adopted by them for this area was to send a large number of Pakistani nationals, soldiers and tribals, to rouse the local population in the name of Islam. This plan was put in operation in the Poonch area to start with. Large numbers of armed Pakistanis began to cross the Jehlum by barges to enter into the State. The state Government protested repeatedly to Pakistan and West Punjab Governments, as also to the Deputy Commissioner of Rawalpindi during September and October, 1947 against this violation of the State territory by Pakistan nationals. But the protests were of no avail.

When the invasion of Kashmir began, the trouble in the Poonch area had already become widespread with the collaboration of the local Muslims under the guidance of Sardar Mohd. Ibrahim Khan who later became the President of the so-called Azad Kashmir Government. Simultaneously with the invasion of the valley fresh raids on other parts of this area began. The Muslim personnel of the 2nd Jammu and Kashmir Infantry which had been posted in this sector, now deserted to the enemy. The Dogra troops hard-pressed from all sides could not stand the strain. They realized that it was impossible to defend the whole area against Pakistani invaders and local rebels. So they concentrated themselves in the few towns to which the Hindu population from the surrounding areas had gone for safety. Very soon all these towns were cut off from one another as also from Jammu. The history of the war in this region after the 22nd of October, therefore, is the history of the defense of these besieged towns by the civil population with the help of the State troops who had managed to reach them. Their only hope of safety was reinforcements of Indian troops from Jammu or Srinagar. Unfortunately this expected relief failed to reach them in time, except in the case of Kotli and Poonch. They fell to the enemy one by one. Their history is one of tragic destruction and genocide in spite of the most heroic defense and sacrifices by the Hindu population. In chronological order, the part to fall was Bhimber.

1. Bhimber: This town, with a normal population of three thousand which had swelled to about five thousand because of some refugees from Pakistan and Hindus from surrounding villages, lies just two miles within the State border. It was a tehsil headquarter within the Mirpur district. It fell to the armed Pakistani raiders who began shelling the town with heavy guns. Just at this time, the Indian Dakotas were carrying the first consignment of airborne troops to Srinagar. The people of the town who had assembled in the courtyard of the fort-like tehsil building found all their roads of escape blocked. Still some of them rushed out with the few State troops. But most of them could not. Finding that no hope was left, hundreds of Hindu ladies took poison which they had taken with them as a precaution and thus revived the practice of 'Jauhar'. Many others were kidnapped along with their children. The male population was put to the sword.

Perhaps the fall of this town, though it was very tragic, could not be avoided because there were no troops in Jammu which could have been rushed to save it. But that was not the case with the other towns which fell soon after one by one.

2. Rajauri: This town with a normal population of about six thousand which had swelled to about 11 thousand at the time of its fall because of the arrival of Hindus from the surrounding villages, lies in the interior of Jammu Province on the old Mughal road to Kashmir. It was a tehsil headquarter within the Riasa district before its fall.

This town was considered to be comparatively safe because of its being out of the direct reach of the Pakistan raiders. But the local Muslims, aided by the deserters from State troops did not wait for the raiders. The urgent calls of the besieged population for help were in vain because the gravity of the situation in these areas was not appreciated by Sheikh Abdullah who continued to divert all available Indian troops to Kashmir. The result was that the town fell on the 10th of November before the local Muslims who proved to be more cruel and barbarous than the tribal raiders. The story of Bhimber was repeated with the difference that the number of the persons who could escape to Jammu safely from here did not exceed a hundred. Most of the ladies performed 'Jauhar' by taking poison while many of the youth, died fighting. Many of those who managed to escape were killed on the way by local Muslims. The number of ladies abducted from this town ran into several hundreds.

3. Kotli: This town with a normal population of 3 to 4 thousand was a tehsil headquarter within the Mirpur district. It lies on the Jehlum-Mirpur-Poonch road. The small detachments of the State troops spread between Mirpur and Poonch had concentrated themselves in this town when their

position in the interior became untenable. Colonel Baldev Singh Pathania, the Revenue Minister of the State, who had been sent to guide the operations of the State troops in this area as also Brigadier Chatar Singh, the officer in-charge, had also taken shelter in this town. It was surrounded on all sides by the well armed local rebels and Pakistani raiders. Therefore no contact could be made with Jammu or Mirpur.

The ammunition with the troops in Kotli ran out early in November. It would have therefore, fallen to the enemy and suffered the same fate as Bhimber but for the heroic gallantry of a few local young men. An Indian army plane dropped about 20 chests of ammunition in the town. But per chance instead of falling at a safe place they fell on a deep slope outside the town within the range of the enemy fire from the adjoining hill. To bring the chests into the town was a problem. It looked like sure death. No volunteers were coming forth even from among the troops. There upon about 20 members of the local branch of the R.S.S. volunteered themselves. They succeeded in salvaging about 17 chests of ammunition. Their heroism and sacrifice enabled the town to defend itself until it was relieved a few days later by an advance party of the Parachute Brigade of the Indian army stationed at Jhangar.

Though saved from the enemy at that time, this town was abandoned by the Indian army later. It withdrew from Kotli to Jhangar after evacuating all the civil population and the troops who had been defending it for over a month. This proved to be a military blunder. It made the position of the besieged population and garrison at Poonch precarious. It also relieved many hundreds of raiders besieging this town who now joined hands with the besiegers of Mirpur. That ill-fated town was next to fall.

4. Mirpur: This strategic town of a normal population of about 10 thousand which had swelled to about 25 thousand at the time of its fall was the headquarters of the Mirpur district. It lies at a distance of about 20 miles from the town and cantonment of Jhelum.

Mirpur had been cut off from Jammu after the fall of Bhimber and Kotli. It had a garrison of State troops. But it had run out of ammunition. Therefore it was feared that Mirpur may meet the same fate as Bhimber & Kotli.

It was a district headquarter and center of influential Mahajans, a fair colored Vaish community with distinct, Aryan features; many of its people hid their relatives in Jammu. They were naturally worried about their fate. They approached Praja-Parishad for moving the authorities to relieve Mirpur.

Pt. Prem Nath Dogra and myself met Brigadier Paranjpe, the Commander of Indian troops in Jammu and requested him to send reinforcement to Mirpur. He shared our anxiety but expressed his helplessness because as per instructions from above, all deployment of Indian troops in the State had to be done in consultation with Sh. Abdullah who was indifferent to the needs of Jammu.

He informed us that Pt. Nehru was visiting Jammu en- route to Srinagar on November 25, and suggested that we should approach him and request him to give proper directions to Sh. Abdullah in the matter.

I met Pt. Nehru at Satwari aerodrome and told him about the critical situation in Mirpur and requested him to order immediate reinforcement of Indian troops to the beleaguered town. I was amazed at his response. He flew into a rage and shouted: "Talk to Sheikh Sahib - talk to Sheikh Sahib. ' I then told him that Sheikh Sahib was indifferent to the plight of the Jammu region, and that he alone could do something to save the people of Mirpur. But all my entreaties fell on deaf

ears. No reinforcement was sent to Mirpur.

Mirpur fell on the 25th of November 1947, when the enemy broke open the back gate of the walled town by heavy gunfire. The state troops and local officers then lost heart and retreated even before the town could be evacuated by the civilians. The people, therefore, began to run in terror. The fight soon became a rout and the rout a massacre. Hardly two thousand people out of about 25 thousand living at that time in the ill-fated town managed to reach Jhangar in safety. The rest were ruthlessly butchered. The number of women abducted from there ran into thousands. Most of them were paraded and then sold in the bazaars of Jehlum, Rawalpindi and Peshawar. The barbarities of the Pakistan troops and civilians on these hapless women who were kept for sometime in Alibeg camp before their dispersal to different towns put to shame the worst orgies of rape and violence associated with the hordes of Ghengiz Khan and Nadir Shah.

The loot obtained by the Pakistanis from these towns, especially from Mirpur, went into crores. The floor of every house in Mirpur was dug by raiders in search of hoarded treasures.

5. Deva Vatala: Next to fall along the Jammu-Pakistan border in Bhimber Tehsil was the cluster of Hindu villages inhabited by Chib Rajputs and known by the name of Deva-Vatala. The warlike people of these villages kept the Pakistanis at bay for two months with their crude weapons. But when Pakistanis began to attack them with modern firearms supplied by the Pakistan Government they approached Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed then Chief Emergency Officer for Jammu Province, to supply them with arms and ammunition. But no heed was paid to their requests. Toward the end of December 1947, thousands of Chibs of the area retreated to Jammu with what little they could bring on their heads as refugees. The occupation of Deva-Vatala by the enemy brought him within 30 miles of the city of Jammu from the West.

6. Poonch: The only town of this area which did not succumb to the enemy pressure was Poonch. The small garrison of the State troops supported by the Indian troops who managed to reach there from Uri, kept the enemy at bay for one long year. Their task would have become impossible but for the daring landings of the I.A.F. Dakotas on an improvised air strip in the town, which lay within firing range of the enemy who commanded the surrounding hills. This town was later relieved by the Indian forces advancing from Rajauri.

The story of the war in the Jammu sector is thus a continuous tragedy occassionally relieved by episodes of glory provided by the heroes of Kotli, or the defenders of Poonch. But the most unfortunate part of it is that little is known to the people in India and outside about this side of the Kashmir story.

The sense of tragedy about happenings in Jammu area is heightened by the fact that most of this area fell in the enemy hands and massacres took place there after the State-acceded to India and the Indian troops had taken charge of the defense of the State.

Kashmir valley having been cleared of the enemy by the 8th of November, Indian troops could have conveniently turned their attention to this strategic area. They could have at least relieved the beleaguered towns of Rajauri and Mirpur and prevented the worst massacre of Indian history after Timur's massacre of Delhi in 1398 from taking place at Mirpur.

That they could not do so was not the fault of army commanders. The men responsible for these massacres were Pt. Nehru and Sh. Abdullah. Pt. Nehru would not allow anybody else in India to advise him in his handling of the Kashmir situation. He was solely guided by Sh. Abdullah, who had no interest in any other part of the State except the Kashmir valley. His critics even go to the length of charging him with deliberate indifference toward the fate of beleaguered Hindus. That

may or may not be correct, but the fact remains that he refused to send troops for the relief of Mirpur even when they were not so urgently needed in the Kashmir valley.

Genocide

A more painful aspect of this unmitigated tragedy of Jammu is that very little about it is known in India or the outside world. Even though the number of Hindu men and women killed and abducted in Jammu area is at least three times that of the Muslim casualties, not a word of sympathy about them was said in India or at the U.N.O. On the other hand both Sh. Abdullah and his Indian patrons made so much noise about killings of Muslims in Jammu that Ch. Zaffarullah, Pakistan's representative at the U.N.O., could indict the Government of India of genocide of Muslims in Jammu with telling effect.

If the ruthless killings in Jammu area could be called genocide, it was a genocide of the Hindus and not of the Muslims. While most of the Muslims in the Hindu majority parts of Jammu province migrated to Pakistan, only a few thousands out of over a lakh of Hindus including refugees from adjoining district of West Punjab could escape to safety from Mirpur-Poonch-Muzaffarabad region.

The External Affairs Ministry of the Government of India did a singular disservice to India and the world by not bringing true facts of the Jammu story to the notice of the U.N. and the world. Pt. Nehru was thus not only unjust to the Maharaja, but also to the heroic people of Jammu who fought the Pakistani invaders and saboteurs on their own and thus saved the vital link between Kashmir Valley and East Punjab from falling into Pakistan's hands which would have made Kashmir operation infructuous.

Fall Of Gilgit

Foiled in their attempt to capture Srinagar and occupy Kashmir valley which would have automatically cut off all the northern parts of the State from India and brought them under Pakistan's control without much effort, the Pakistani strategists now decided to capture those parts first both for their own strategic importance and also for encircling the valley from the North. The closure of Burzila and Yojila passes which provided the only link between Kashmir valley and Gilgit, Baltistan and Laddakh due to the onset of winter made the chances of any timely help from Indian army to small detachments of the Kashmir state forces in these parts extremely difficult if not impossible. This was an additional temptation for Pakistan to lay her hand on them just then.

Gilgit, the western most part of trans-Himalayan frontier region of the State being directly continuous to Pakistan and approachable from Peshawar was the first to be attacked and occupied.

The Dogra rulers of Kashmir had a special sentimental attachment with Gilgit because of the great sacrifices made by the Dogra people in conquering it. The "Samadhis" of thousands of Dogra soldiers who had laid down their lives in the various Gilgit campaigns between 1859 and 1895 which finally brought the entire Gilgit area including the Gilgit states like Hunza, Nagar, Ishkuman, Koh and Gizar under Dogra rule, are still a grim reminder of their adventurous spirit and patriotic fervour. They had, therefore, resisted British pressure to surrender the control of this area to them as long as they could.

After obtaining a lease of the Gilgit area for sixty years from Maharaja Hari Singh in 1935, the British had set about building it as a strategic outpost in the chain of their North Western

defences. It had been linked with Peshawar by a new road. A local force called "Gilgit Scouts" on the model of Frontier Guides, led by British officers had been raised and a British Political Agent was posted at Gilgit to control the administered area and the States of Gilgit Agency whose rulers continued to owe allegiance to the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir as well. The State forces stationed at Gilgit had been withdrawn to Bunji on the left bank of the Indus about 35 miles South of Gilgit cantonment.

Soon after the announcement about transfer of power the Gilgit Agency had been retroceded to the Maharaja who celebrated the occasion with great joy. He had then appointed Brigadier Ghansar Singh as military Governor of the area. He had reached Gilgit along with Major General Scotts then Chief of Staff of the State army, on July 20, 1947. On arrival there they found that all British officers in Gilgit Scouts also wanted to go over to Pakistan. The only force available to the Governor was the 6th J&K Infantry stationed at Bunji which was half Muslim and half Sikh. It was commanded by a Muslim officer of doubtful loyalty, Lt. Colonel Majid Khan.

In the circumstances it was clear that British officers on the spot were strongly pro-Pakistan. What was worse they had also poisoned the minds of the Rajas of Gilgit States, who so far had a deep feeling of personal loyalty to the Maharaja. It was also clear that the Maharaja's Government at that time was in no position to hold Gilgit militarily against the combined strength of Chitral and Swat levies backed by Pakistan Government and Gilgit Scouts, particularly when the loyalty of the Muslim officers and other ranks of its own army had become doubtful.

It was suggested to the Maharaja by some people who knew about the difficult situation in Gilgit that he might lease out the area to Afghanistan on the same terms on which it was held by the British. But the suggestion was never taken up seriously. Afghanistan might have welcomed such a move if it had been seriously mooted.

The things began to move fast after the launching of the fullscale Pakistan invasion of Kashmir in October, 1947. The Muslim personnel of the State army deserted. On the night of October 31, the Gilgit scouts together with these deserters surrounded the residence of the Governor who was forced to surrender. He was put under arrest and a provisional Government was established by the rebels. Most of the non-Muslims in the State army and town population were liquidated and a few made prisoners. Three days later, Major Brown, the British Commandant of Gilgit of Scouts, formally raised the flag of Pakistan in the Scouts lines. Soon after a political Agent from Pakistan established himself in Gilgit.

The fall of Gilgit into the hands of Pakistan and the role played by British Officers in the whole affair throws a flood of light on the British attitude towards the Kashmir questions from its very inception. Their imperial interests demanded that Jammu and Kashmir State as a whole or at least its northern parts including the Kashmir valley should go to Pakistan which they considered to be more dependable of the two new Dom inions.

After consolidating their position in Gilgit the Pakistan militarists hurried to control the approaches to the valley before the winter had run out. One of their columns advanced towards the Burzila pass, occupied it, and began to infiltrate into Guraish area of Kashmir from that side. Another column advanced west, bypassed Askardu, the capital town of Baltistan, for it had a Dogra garrison in its fort, and occupied Kargil without much difficulty. Kargil lies on the road connecting Srinagar with Leh and Askardu through the Yojila Pass. From Kargil one of their columns began to advance toward Leh and the other advanced south and occupied the Yojila pass. Some of them even succeeded in infiltrating into Kashmir valley.

Thus before the winter was over and before any reinforcements to Askardu, Kargil or Leh could

be sent, the Pakistanis with the help of the Gilgit scouts and local recruits, for whom winter weather was no hindrance, had occupied both the passes linking these areas with Kashmir valley. Leh too would have fallen before the Pakistanis, who despoiled many monasteries and killed about five hundred Buddhists, but for the adventurous and hazardous dash of a Lahauli officer of the Indian Army, Captain Prithvi Chand, with a few companions toward Leh through Lahaul in Mid-winter. He succeeded in reaching Leh, organized a local militia and improvised an air strip at the height of about 11500 feet above sea level, where an equally adventurous Indian Pilot, Sardar Mehar Singh, landed his Dakota carrying sinews of war and thus saved Leh from meeting the fate of Kargil and Gilgit.

The besieged garrison and Hindu population of Askardu was soon reduced to sore straits by the besieging Pakistani forces. The I.A.F. did drop some supplies to them but due to bad weather and great heights that had to be crossed, they fell far short of the minimum needs of the besieged garrison. At last Colonel Sher Jang Thapa of the State forces surrendered to the Pakistanis after a gallant resistance of many months on August 15, 1948. The entire Hindu population as also most of the surviving troops were put to the sword.

Fall of Gilgit, siege of Askardu, genocide of the Hindus in Bhimber, Rajouri and Mirpur and retreat from Deva- Vatala shocked Maharaja Hari Singh who had acceded to India in the hope that Indian army would be above to save his territories and people from the Pak invaders. People of the affected areas of Jammu flocked to him with their tales of woe. He sympathized with them but could do nothing to relieve their agony. He had no control over the administration and deployment of the armed forces. Sh. Aibdullah, fortified by the blind support of Pt. Nehru, was indifferent about the fate of Jammu and other parts of the state. His motives and intentions had become suspect to all friends and well- wishers of India, including Justice Kanwar Dileep Singh who had been appointed Agent-General of the Government of India to watch the Indian interests in the state. Pt. Premnath Dogra and myself met him at the Residency in Jammu in mid-January 1948. We found him thoroughly disgusted and disillusioned about the role of Sh. Abdullah. He frankly told us that he was convinced that Sh. Abdullah was not playing fair to India. He was more interested in consolidating his position in the Kashmir valley than safeguarding national interests and unity and security of the country. He informed us that he was going to Delhi to apprise Prime Minister Nehru of his assessment and added, that he would return only if his advice was heeded and he was in a position to safeguard the national interests. He made it clear that he had accepted the post for serving the country and not for its pay of Rs. 5,000 a month. He would rather resign than be a mute witness to Sh. Abdullah's anti-national actions and activities. He never returned. This was a clear indication that Pt. Nehru was in the pocket of Abdullah so far as Kashmir was concerned.

As the founder leader of Jammu Parishad, I then decided to visit Delhi to meet and apprise Sardar Patel and other national leaders about the developing situation in the state and impress on them the urgent need to set things right. I left Jammu on January 29, 1948. I had to meet Sardar Patel in Delhi on February 2nd.

Assassination of Mahatma Gandhi in January 30, upset everything. I could meet the Sardar a month later on March 8th. He gave me a patient hearing and hinted that he was aware of the situation by saying: "You are trying to convince a convinced man." But he expressed his inability to do anything because Kashmir was being handled by Pt. Nehru. He suggested that I should meet Pt. Nehru and also got my appointment with him fixed. I met Pt. Nehru the day after. His response was most disappointing. He was not prepared to hear a word of criticism of Sh. Abdullah. In the meantime, Sh. Abdullah externed me from the state and banned my re- entry into it. He also externed my parents from Jammu where my father had decided to settle after retirement from state service.

Though my meeting with Sardar Patel and Pt. Nehru had no immediate effect, a top secret letter that Maharaja Hari Singh had sent to Sardar Patel on January 31 did influence the Government of India and military operations in the state thereafter.

A Historic Letter

This is a historic letter which throws a flood of light on the exact situation in and about Jammu & Kashmir at that time and the mind of Hari Singh.

After describing the prevailing political military situation in detail, he wrote:

"In the situation described above a feeling comes to my mind as to the possible steps I may take and to make, as far as I am concerned, a clean breast of the situation. Sometime I feel that I should withdraw the accession that I have made to the Indian Union. Indian Union only provisionally accepted the accession and if it cannot recover back our territory and is going eventually to agree to the decision of the Security Council which may result in handing us over to Pakistan then there is no point in sticking to the accession of the state to the Indian union. For the time being it may be possible to have better terms from Pakistan but that is immaterial because eventually it will mean end of the dynasty and the end of Hindus and Sikhs in the state. There is an alternative possible for me and that is to withdraw the accession. That may kill the reference to U.N.O. because Union of India has no right to continue the proceedings before the Security Council if the accession is withdrawn. The result may be a return to the position the state held before the accession. The difficulty in that situation, however, will be that the Indian troops cannot be maintained in the state except as volunteers to help the state. I am prepared to take over the command of my own forces along with the forces of the Indian army and volunteers to help the state... I am tired of the present life and it is much better to die fighting than watch helplessly the heart breaking misery of my people.

"So far as internal political situation is concerned I am prepared to be a constitutional ruler of the state... But I am not satisfied with the leaders of National Conference. They do not command the confidence of the Hindus and Sikhs and even of a large section of Muslims. I must therefore keep some reserved powers of which you are already aware, and I must have a Dewan of my free choice as a member of the cabinet and possibly as its president.

"Another alternative that strikes me is that if I can do nothing I should leave the state (short abdication) and reside outside so that people do not think that I can do anything for them... Of course I will anticipate that as people started saying when I left Kashmir only on Mr. Menon's advice that I had run away from Srinagar, they will say that I have left them in their hour of misery. But it is no use remaining in a position where one can do nothing merely to avoid criticism.

"The third alternative in the situation is that the Indian Dominion discharges its duty on the military side effectively and makes an all out effort to stop the raids from Pakistan and to drive out of the state not only raiders but also all rebels... Pakistan is more organized against Kashmir than the Indian Dominion and as soon as snow melts it will start attacking Kashmir on all sides and the Province of Laddakh will also come into the hands of the enemy... Therefore unless the Indian Union makes up its mind to fight fully and effectively, I may have to decide upon the two alternatives mentioned above".

This letter jolted the Government of India out of its complacency in regard to the war. The Indian army thereafter devised a new strategy which turned the tide against Pakistan by the end of the year. Pakistan army were on the run all along the four hundred mile long battle front. The Indian

army would have completed the job entrusted to it by clearing the whole State of the Pakistani invaders both regular and irregular, in course of time had it not been halted by the unilateral cease fire ordered by the Government of India on the first of January, 1949. This was done in pursuance of the resolution of the U.N. Security Council.

Reference of Kashmir issue to U.N. and interplay of super power politics there which gave a new and unexpected dimension and twist to Kashmir problem is even more painful and perplexing. It composed foreign policy of India and its sole architect, Pt. Nehru.

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KASHMIR

The Storm Center of the World

Bal Raj Madhok

CHAPTER VIII

BUNGLING AT U.N.

Instrument of accession executed by Maharaja Hari Singh was similar to such instruments executed by the rulers of other acceding states. There was no scope for ifs and buts in it. According to it the accession was full, final and irrevocable and not in any way conditional or provisional. It should have, therefore, settled the questions of future of Jammu and Kashmir state once for all. The problem created by Pak invasion could be effectively tackled by the Indian armed forces.



Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru

But one blunder of Pt. Nehru virtually undid what accession had achieved. Lord Mountbatten as constitutional head of the state wrote a letter to Hari Singh on October 27 in which he mooted the question of ascertaining the wishes of the people of the state about accession to India after the Pak invaders were thrown out. This letter was followed by a statement by Pt. Nehru to the same effect. It was a grave blunder ramification of which have continued to cloud and complicate an issue which was legally and constitutionally settled by the acceptance of the accession of the Jammu and Kashmir state to India on October 26, 1947. This reminds one of the well known couplet:

Woh Waqt bhi dekha hai
Tareekh ke gaharaiyon men,
Lamhon ne khata ki
Sadion ne saza pai.

"Mistake committed at the spur of a moment proved to be a curse and punishment for centuries."

The offer of plebiscite was uncalled for, irrelevant to the situation and illegal. There was no provision in the instrument of Accession about it. It was outside the ambit of the Act of Indian Independence of the British Parliament. It was never accepted by the Maharaja who had absolute choice in the matter. Nor was it demanded by Sh. Abdullah or any other leader of the State.

The argument that Indian leaders were guided by the situation in Junagarh and Hyderabad in making their offer is untenable because there was no analogy between those states and the situation obtaining in Kashmir. Both Junagarh and Hyderabad were not only overwhelmingly Hindu in population but also completely surrounded on all sides by Indian territory. Therefore under the Mountbatten plan they had no other choice but to accede to India. The only plausible explanation therefore is that Lord Mountbatten made the suggestion about plebiscite merely to placate Pakistan and Pt. Nehru accepted it for the same reason. It was in keeping with his policy of appeasement of Muslim League and Pakistan. Later, however, other explanation: such as refutation of the two-nation theory by showing that a Muslim majority area was prepared to remain in India of its own free will and thereby strengthening of secularism in India have also been offered. But they are after thoughts.

This blunder provided Mr. Jinnah with an opportunity to politicize and internationalize the military issue and convert his impending defeat on the battle field into an eventual political and diplomatic victory. He sent a message to Lord Mountbatten through Field Marshal Auchinleck on the 29th October, 1947 to meet him in conference at Lahore. It was a clever and astute move to make the issue political while the invasion was still on and the possible military decision could not be in his favor.

Sardar Patel, a realist and a practical man as he was, saw through Mr. Jinnah's game. He opposed any Indian leader going to Lahore and warned against appeasing Mr. Jinnah who was clearly the aggressor in Kashmir. He suggested that if Mr. Jinnah wanted to discuss anything, he could come down to Delhi. But his wise counsel was not heeded and Lord Mountbatten and Pt. Nehru got ready to fly to Lahore on the 1st of November. Pt. Nehru, however, had to drop out at the last moment due to indisposition.

At the Conference Table Mr. Jinnah proposed that both sides should withdraw from Kashmir. When Lord Mountbatten asked him to explain how the tribesman could be induced to remove themselves Mr. Jinnah replied: "If you do this, I will call the whole thing off." This made it absolutely clear that the so-called tribal invasion was fully organized and controlled by the Pakistan Government.

Lord Mountbatten formally made the offer of plebiscite to Mr. Jinnah at this Conference. Mr. Jinnah objected that with Indian troops in their midst and with Sh. Abdullah in power, the people of Kashmir would be far too frightened to vote for Pakistan. Therefore Lord Mountbatten suggested a plebiscite under the auspices of the U.N.O. This was a clear victory for Mr. Jinnah. He had virtually got the effect of legal accession of the State to India nullified and got Lord Mountbatten committed to a course of action which could only internationalize an issue in which strictly speaking Pakistan had no locus standi after the Maharaja had signed the Instrument of Accession and the Government of India had accepted it.

Pt. Nehru ratified the offer verbally made by Lord Mountbatten at Lahore in his broadcast speech of November 2, 1947 in which he declared his readiness, after peace and rule of law had been established, to have a referendum held under some international auspices such as that of the United Nations.

The commitment on the part of the Government of India had, besides throwing the accession of Kashmir to India open to question, two other important implications. On the one hand it provided Pakistan with a second string to its bow. Conscious of the strength of the appeal of religion to Muslims, it could now hope to secure by the peaceful method of plebiscite what it failed to achieve by force. On the other hand, it made the Government of India dependent for the ratification of the accession through plebiscite on the goodwill of Sheikh Abdullah whose position was changed from that of a suppliant to that of an arbiter who must be kept in good humor at all costs. These in their turn set in motion a chain of events and created a psychological atmosphere in Kashmir which suited Pakistan.

Even this major concession which gave Pakistan a whip hand in Kashmir, did not soften the attitude of Mr. Jinnah and his Government who kept up their military pressure through tribal hordes supported by regular Pakistani troops at a high pitch. Even though the invaders had been thrown out of the valley, they maintained, as described earlier, their advance in Jammu and the northern areas of the State. The right and honorable course for India in the circumstances was to discontinue all negotiations with Pakistan and concentrate on securing a military decision. India, at that time, was definitely in a position to secure a favorable military decision had it decided to attack the bases of the invaders in Pakistan. But Pt. Nehru in his anxiety to keep the conflict confined to Jammu & Kashmir State would not permit that. In this he had the full support of the Governor General, Lord Mountbatten. Therefore, the negotiations were continued even when Pakistani invaders were wantonly attacking and occupying more and more territory.

Direct talks between Pt. Nehru and Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, were held for the first time since Pakistani invasion began, on December 8, 1947 when the former visited Lahore along with Lord Mountbatten to attend a meeting of the Joint Defense Council. But they proved abortive. Therefore Lord Mountbatten who was growing apprehensive of the fighting in Kashmir degenerating into full scale war between the two Dominions, a contingency which he wanted to avoid at all costs, pressed Pt. Nehru to refer the matter to the U.N.O. and invoke its good offices for a peaceful settlement of the problem.

Appeal to U.N.O.

Most of Pt. Nehru's Cabinet colleagues were opposed to this suggestion for obvious reasons. It amounted to inviting outside interference into a purely internal and domestic problem and a tacit admission on the part of India of its inability and incapacity to meet the situation created by the invaders. But ultimately he had his way.

As a necessary preliminary, he personally handed over a letter of complaint to Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan on December 22, 1947 when the latter visited Delhi in connection with another meeting of the Joint Defense Council. It demanded that Pakistan should deny to the invaders (i) all access to and use of Pakistan territory for operations against Kashmir (ii) all military and other supplies and (iii) all other kinds of aid that might tend to prolong the struggle.

Liaqat Ali Khan promised to send an early reply. But instead of doing that a fresh invasion was launched in Jammu which forced an Indian brigade to fall back to Nowshera from Jhangar, an important road junction in the western part of Jammu region. The pressure on areas still nearer to Jammu city was also stepped up. This made attack on the enemy bases in Pakistan an imperative necessity to save Jammu and the supply line to Srinagar. But Pt. Nehru was unwilling to do that. So, without waiting for a reply from Pakistan which was being deliberately delayed, the Government of India formally appealed to the U.N.O. under Chapter 35 of the U.N. Charter on December 31, 1947 and nominated Shri Gopalaswamy Iyengar to lead the Indian Delegation which was to include Sh. Abdullah also.

That very day, but after the application to the U.N. Security Council had been despatched, Liaquat Ali Khan's reply was received by the Government of India. It was lengthy catalog of counter charges. It contained fantastic allegations that the Government of India were out to destroy Pakistan, it also raised the question of Junagarh. It gave clear indication of the line Pakistan was going to take at the U.N.O. From the timing of the reply, it was evident that Pakistan Government had its informers in the Indian Foreign Office who kept it posted with the exact details of the Indian complaint and the time of its despatch. This presence of Pakistani agents and informers in the Indian Foreign Office is an advantage that continues to give Pakistan an edge over India in diplomacy.

This appeal to the U.N.O. by India was the second major blunder on her part in handling of the Kashmir question and was a clear diplomatic victory for Pakistan which succeeded in politicizing an issue in which she had no locus standi. It came as a surprise not only to the Indian public but also to all those countries which had been looking upon the Kashmir question as an internal affair of India. No self-respecting country would have voluntarily invited the interference of foreign powers through the U.N.O. in an essentially domestic affair like this. In doing so, the Government of India simply played into the hands of Pakistan whose leaders found in it a God-sent opportunity to malign India before the bar of world opinion by levelling all kind of fantastic and baseless charges against her.

The Security Council immediately put the issue on its agenda and discussion on it began on January 15, 1948. But to the great disappointment of the Government of India, instead of giving precedence to the Indian complaint about Pakistan's hand in the invasion and putting pressure on Pakistan to stop aiding the invaders, the security council from the very beginning put India and Pakistan the victim of aggression and the aggressor, on the same footing and began to consider Pakistan's counter-charges, which were quite unrelated to the basic issue, along with the question of Pak aggression on Jammu & Kashmir. This was clear from the resolution moved by the Council President Dr. Von Langenhare of Belgium on January 20, 1948. The resolution provided that (i) a Commission of the Security Council be established composed of the representatives of three members of the United Nations, one to be elected by India, one by Pakistan and the third to be designated by the two so elected: (ii) the Commission shall proceed to Jammu & Kashmir as soon as possible to investigate the facts and secondly to exercise any mediatory influence likely to smoothen the difficulties and (iii) the Commission shall perform functions in regard to the situation in Jammu & Kashmir and secondly in regard to other situations set out by Pakistan foreign Minister in the Security Council.

In spite of the objections of the Indian delegation that by bringing other extraneous issues raised by Pakistan within the purview of the Commission, the Security Council was relegating the real issue to the background, the resolution was passed with nine in favor and two, USSR and Ukraine, abstaining.

As the debate proceeded, the President suggested that the Security Council might concentrate its attention on the question of holding a plebiscite. This was fully in accordance with Pakistan's line and was therefore duly supported by her Foreign Minister and chief delegate, Mr. Zaffarullah Khan. Thereafter resolutions and proposals began to be framed with that end in view.

This provoked the Chief Indian delegate, Mr. N. Gopala Swamy Ayyengar, to declare that the Security Council was "putting the cart before the horse". The real issue, he said, was to get the fighting in Jammu & Kashmir stopped by pressing Pakistan to withdraw her support from the invaders. The question of a plebiscite, he added could be taken up only when peace and normal conditions had been restored. He further requested for adjournment of the debates so that he might go back to India for further consultations. Even this request for adjournment was opposed

by most of the members of the Security Council.

This hostile attitude of the Security Council came as a rude shock to the Government of India and disillusioned even Pt. Nehru who had insisted on reference being made to the U.N.O. against the advice of his colleagues. Speaking at Jammu on February 15, 1948 he said, "Instead of discussing and deciding our references in a straight forward manner, the nations of the world sitting in that body got lost in power politics."

The pattern of voting in the Security Council began to influence India's foreign policy in favor of the bloc headed by the U.S.S.R. which further prejudiced the Western countries against India in regard to the Kashmir question.

Causes of India's Failure at U.N.

But it would be wrong to put the whole blame for this near unanimous disregard of Indian complaint on the power politics of the two blocs which was reflected in their attitude and voting at the U.N. on invariably all issues. India's handling and presentation of the Kashmir issue was so faulty, unrealistic and incoherent from the very beginning that it could not evoke any better response even from well meaning and really impartial delegates. This bungling on the part of India in handling a straightforward issue because of the mental cobwebs of Pt. Nehru must be clearly understood for appreciation of the Kashmir problem as it has since developed inside and outside the U.N.O.

From the purely Indian point of view it was, as said above, wrong to refer the Kashmir issue to the U.N.O. It was a domestic issue. Pakistan had committed unprovoked aggression. India was in a position to handle the situation militarily. It should have been left to Pakistan to invoke the interference of the U.N.O. to escape the thrashing it deserved. But instead of putting Pakistan in a tight position, India decided to put her own head in the noose. It was utter bankruptcy of leadership as well as statesmanship.

Having taken the decision to go to the U.N.O., the issue should have been put before that body in its true perspective emphasising the fact of Pakistan's aggression in Jammu and Kashmir State which had become an integral part of India after accession in terms of the Mauntbatten Plan. India should have specifically charged Pakistan of unprovoked aggression and not of mere abetment of aggression by giving passage to tribal raiders through her territory. There was an overwhelming evidence that the aggression had been committed by Pakistan itself. By avoiding the specific charge of aggression in her complaint, the Government of India compromised its own position before the Security Council from the very beginning. Such a complaint could not create that sense of urgency about the problem and the real issue of aggression in the minds of Security Council members who were not supposed to know the real situation and had, therefore, to be guided by the memoranda submitted by the respective parties and their elucidation through the speeches in the Council.

If the Indian plaint was wrong in so far as it underplayed Pakistan's hand behind the invasion, its advocacy was worse. The man chosen to lead the Indian delegation, N. Gopala Swamy-Ayyengar, was a good old man who had been Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir for some years before 1944. But he was a novice to the ways of U.N. diplomacy which is conducted more at informal meetings and late night dinners and drinking parties than at the Council table. He was an honest gentleman who believed in the Indian concept of "early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise." He was too honest and simple hearted to be a match for Pakistan's Zaffarullah Khan, who, apart from being a leading jurist, was man of few scruples, wide contacts and great eloquence. It is really surprising why Mehar Chand Mahajan who as a

jurist and a debater was more than a match for Pakistan's Zaffrullah, was not chosen for the job. Being the Prime Minister of the State during the days of Pakistani invasion, he was best suited to rebutt the baseless charges and lies of Pakistan. The only explanation for this lapse is that he was a persona non grata with Pt. Nehru who often gave preference to his own likes and dislikes over the interests of his country.

To make things worse, the Indian delegation included Sh. Abdullah, "a flamboyant personality" about whom Campbell Johnson, the gifted press Attache of Lord Mountbatten, had predicted that he would "Swamp the boat of India." He was more interested in projecting himself and running down the Maharaja, who was the real legal sanction behind Kashmir's accession to India, and Dogra Hindus than in pleading the cause of India.

No wonder therefore that the statements and speeches made by him on different occasions as also the statements and speeches of Pt. Nehru provided Zafarullah with the stick to beat India with.

Even more inexplicable was the failure of the Indian spokesmen to lay proper stress on the fact of accession by the Maharaja which in itself was full, final and irrevocable and from which all the rights of the Government of India flowed. They harped on the "will of the people of Kashmir" and India's offer to them to give their verdict about the accession through a plebiscite after peace had been restored there.

The members of the Security Council as also world opinion in general had not been properly educated regarding the true facts of the Kashmir situation. The external publicity of the Government of India in this as in other matters was halting and hesitating. The government of India itself appeared to be apologetic about the acceptance of Kashmir's accession. It felt shy of telling to the world the atrocities committed by Pakistani and local Muslims on the Hindus of the State. It was as anxious to run down the Maharaja as were Sh. Abdullah and Pakistan. It wanted to build its case entirely on the popular support of the people of Kashmir regarding the question of accession rather than on the fact of accession itself.

The Pakistan Government and its delegates at the U.N.O. on the other hand were aggressively assertive about their baseless and unrelated charges against India and blatantly emphatic in their denial of the Indian charge about aiding the Tribal invaders. In the face of Pakistan's categorical denial and Government of India's apologetic and hesitating approach the first impression on world opinion as also on the U.N. circles was distinctly pro-Pakistan and anti-India.

Pakistan had the added advantage of Gilgit on her side. The strategic importance of Gilgit in the overall western strategy to contain Soviet Union was immense and the British were fully conscious of it. Pakistan could treat it as a bargaining counter to win the support of the Western bloc for itself.

The comparatively favorable attitude of the Communist delegates toward India from the very beginning had also something to do with Gilgit. Control of Gilgit and Kashmir Valley by the Western Bloc through Pakistan was considered by Russia a major threat to her armament industries which had been shifted during the World War II to the east of the Ural Mountains. They were within easy reach of Gilgit based bombers. This fact, coupled with the dominant position of pro- Communist elements in Sh. Abdullah's Government who wanted to use Kashmir as a spring-board for Communist revolution in India, influenced Communist Russia to take the side she did. This in its turn helped Pakistan to get further ingratiated with the Western Bloc which had the upper hand in the Security Council.

The pattern that was set in the early debates in the Security Council was reflected in the composition of the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan- UNCIP. India chose Czechoslovakia from the Communist block and Pakistan chose Argentina, and when Pakistan and India failed to agree about their common nominee, the Council President named the USA. The Security Council further decided to raise the strength of the UNCIP to five by nominating two more members-Belgium and Colombia to it.

Pakistan insisted that the Commission should also go into the question of Jungarh, genocide and certain other problems arising out of the partition of India. The USA and Britain helped Pakistan to get these issues discussed in the Security Council. On June 3, 1948, the Council President submitted a resolution which proposed that the commission be directed to proceed without delay to the area of dispute and besides the question of Jammu and Kashmir, study and report to the Security Council when it considers appropriate, on the matters raised in the letter of the Foreign Minister of Pakistan dated January 15, 1948.

This resolution was passed by the Security Council with USSR, Ukraine and Nationalist China (Formosa) abstaining.

This widening of the scope of the UNCIP evoked strong protests from the Indian delegation and the Indian Government. It was even suggested that India should withdraw its complaint from the UN and walk out of it. But, ultimately, the Government of India agreed to receive the Commission and cooperate with it.

U.N. Imbroglio

The UNCIP arrived in India on July 10, 1948 and began discussions with representatives of India and Pakistan. The Pakistan Government which had so far denied any complicity whatsoever in the invasion of Kashmir now found it impossible to hide the facts any longer. Therefore, her Foreign Minister Zafarullah Khan, informed the Commission that regular Pakistan troops had moved "into certain defensive positions" in the State of Jammu & Kashmir. It created an entirely new situation. It more than substantiated the original complaint of India and clearly brought out Pakistan as an aggressor. It necessitated a review of the situation "de novo." It put the question of plebiscite which had been projected to the forefront by Pakistan in the Security Council in the background for the time being and brought home to the Commission the urgency of getting the hostilities stopped first, a point which India had been stressing all along.

On August 13, 1948, the Commission, therefore, formulated and presented to the Government of India and Pakistan a resolution which called upon both sides to stop fighting which was to be followed by a Truce Agreement after which plebiscite was to be conducted in the State under the auspices of a plebiscite administrator to be appointed by the UN to determine the will of the people about the accession of the State. It asked Pakistan to withdraw her troops as a first step towards the creation of conditions in which plebiscite would be held.

India accepted this resolution after obtaining certain clarifications as it vindicated her stand that Pakistan being the aggressor must withdraw her troops first. She particularly stressed the "end of early withdrawal of Pakistani troops from the Northern areas where a garrison of State troops in the fort of Askardu was still holding out against heavy odds.

Pakistan too wanted certain clarifications particularly in regard to the position of the so called "Azad Kashmir" Government which it had set up in the occupied areas of the State. She also wanted to know the clarifications furnished by the Commission to India and Indian acceptance of the clarifications given by the Commission to her before she could accept the said resolution.

While Pakistan was thus procrastinating, the Commission returned to Geneva in September 1948 where it drew up its report which was submitted to the Security Council in November 1948. It admitted in its report that admission by Pakistan about the presence of her troops in Jammu & Kashmir and her overall control of all Pakistani troops and Tribals fighting there had "confronted the Commission with an unforeseen and entirely new situation". It therefore recommended that as a first step toward the final solution of the dispute, the Pakistan Government should be asked to withdraw its forces from the State.

This has not been done by Pakistan so far.

The Security Council resumed its debate on Kashmir on November 25, 1948. It unanimously appealed to India and Pakistan to stop fighting in Kashmir and do nothing to aggravate the situation or endanger the current negotiations.

Following this resolution Dr. Alfred Lozano, a member of the UNCIP, and Dr. Erik Colban, personal representative of the UN Secretary General again visited New Delhi and Karachi to discuss with the two Governments certain proposals supplementary to the resolution of August 13, 1948. They dealt with appointment of a Plebiscite Administrator and certain principles which were to govern the holding of a plebiscite in Jammu and Kashmir after normal conditions had been restored.

Another round of Conference between them and the Prime Minister of India and Pakistan followed, Pt. Nehru asked and obtained certain clarifications from Dr. Lozano which were later published by India in the form of an aide memoire setting out the Indian point of view in greater detail. Dr. Lozano returned to New York on December 26, to report to the Security Council.

Soon after he left, the Government of India without waiting for any further initiative from the U.N.C.I.P. or the Security Council ordered a cease fire to be operative from the midnight of January 1, 1949. Pakistan reciprocated. This brought to an abrupt end the undeclared war between the two Dominions which had continued for nearly 15 months.

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The Storm Center of the World

Bal Raj Madhok

CHAPTER IX

KASHMIR DIVIDED

The Cease fire resulted in de facto partition of Jammu and Kashmir State. It was the second partition within 16 months of the first partition of India which had divided Punjab and Bengal on the basis of the religion of the people.

Whatever the reasons for this impulsive decision of Pt. Nehru the timing that he chose for or ordering cease fire was wrong, and disadvantaged India. Indian troops had left their defensive positions and were advancing on all fronts. Given some more time they could have cleared major part of the State of the Pak invaders and ended the encirclement of the valley. Nehru perhaps was keen to stop the war immediately because he had contended an international conference at New Delhi to consider the situation arising out of Dutch aggression against Indonesia which had just wrested freedom from Dutch Colonial Yoke. He wanted to establish his own bona-fides as a man of peace by ending the war over Kashmir which had been forced on India by Pakistan. This conduct of Nehru was in keeping with his reputation of subordinating national interests to his personal whims and craze for international praise.

The Cease Fire line which was finalised at a joint military conference of India and Pakistan held at Karachi from July 18 to July 28, 1949, divided the Jammu & Kashmir State roughly into two equal parts. Beginning from near the Siachin Glacier in the North this line runs close to the Srinagar-Leh road near Kargil and then runs along the great Himalayan range dividing Kashmir from Baltistan; then turning South a little it passes near the mouth of the Burzila pass on the Kashmir side. From there it runs along the Western mountains dividing Kashmir from Chilas and Karen unto Uri from where it goes South-West parallel to the river Jehlum and touches the Southern boundary of the state near Bhimber. A major portion of Baltistan excepting Kargil, the whole of Gilgit and a major portion of the Punjabi speaking area of Muzaffarabad Poonch and Mirpur fell on the Pakistan side of the Cease Fire line. The strategic Burzila pass, the only direct link between Kashmir valley and Gilgit, also fell on the Pakistan side.

Thus out of six distinct geographical linguistic and cultural regions of the State, three came into the hands of Pakistan. All of them are predominantly Muslim. All Hindus including Sikhs in these parts have either been killed or driven out.

The remaining three - Jammu, Laddakh and Kashmir valley - lie on the Indian side of the Cease Fire Line. Of these, Kashmir valley alone has a Muslim majority. The remaining two are Hindu and Buddhist majority regions of the State.

Thus by proposing the Cease fire and allowing the Pakistani forces to remain in occupation of the

Pakistan held areas of the State, the Indian Government virtually accepted a partition of the State. The Cease Fire Agreement did not mention the right of the State Government to administer the areas held by Pakistan or the so-called Azad Kashmir Government. Those areas were left to be administered by the "Local Authorities" which practically meant the "Azad Kashmir" Government or any other authority sponsored and supported by the Pakistan Government.

Had the Cease Fire been brought about after a serious consideration of the military and political situation with a view to effecting a planned partition of the territory involved as in the case of Korea and Indo-China, it might have well nigh put an end to the problem of Jammu & Kashmir which never possessed any intrinsic geographical, cultural, linguistic and religious unity. But in this case the Cease Fire was the result of just another sudden flash in the impulsive mind of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru who had the rare quality of thinking at leisure after he had acted in haste.

As a result the Cease Fire line did not follow any set geographical topographical or demographical pattern. Even strategic considerations, which should have been kept in mind when drawing the line which had since become more or less an international frontier, could not be given due attention because the Cease Fire had been ordered at a time when the Indian army had left its defensive positions but had not yet fully dislodged Pakistan forces from the strategic and defensive positions which they commanded.

It was just the line of actual control of the armies of India and Pakistan on the first of January 1949. Consequently while the strategic Yojila pass which links Kashmir valley with Laddakh remained in Indian hands, Pakistan retained the control of Burzila pass which links Kashmir Valley with Gilgit. Her control over this pass gave her a strategic advantage. Her army could descend into Kashmir Valley from Gilgit side in case of resumption of hostilities. Further South, the Krishan Ganga which could have formed a natural frontier fell from some distance entirely on the Indian side of the Cease Fire Line before passing into the Pakistan held area. As a result, the rich timber resources of Titwal and Karen forests cannot be fully utilized either by Pakistan or by India. On the west, the Cease Fire Line passed near the town of Uri, which remained in Indian hands, at a distance of about thirty miles from Baramulla, the entrance to Kashmir Valley. Again while a major part of the erstwhile Poonch Jagir including outskirts of Poonch town fell on the Pakistan side, the town itself remained in Indian hands.

This virtual division of Jammu & Kashmir State between India and Pakistan diverted for some time the attention of both India and Pakistan from the discussions at the U.N. to the task of consolidating their position in their respective parts. Pakistan had made valuable gains at the cost of India. But what still remained with India was of no less importance to her. A realistic appraisal of what Pakistan gained and what India still retained and the subsequent internal development in the two parts of the state is an essential pre-requisite for proper appreciation of the developments which have made Kashmir a storm centre and a factor for new international alignments.

Pakistan's Gains

The gains made by Pakistan in the first Indo-Pak war were considerable and significant- from every point of view. Militarily, she could claim to have scored a tactical victory over a much bigger and stronger India. At a much less cost in men and material she was able to add to her dominions a territory roughly equal in size to East Punjab. It was quite a rich dividend for her unprovoked aggression. It confirmed the impression created in the minds of her leaders by the past policy of appeasement and surrender on the part of Indian leadership, that India could be bullied and bluffed into acquiescence and acceptance of any demand however unreasonable it might be if it was backed by adequate force. This created a new confidence and psychology of aggression in Pakistan which has marked her dealings with India on all questions ever since.

Politically, Pakistan had made a mockery of the lawful accession of the Jammu & Kashmir State to India by Maharaja Hari Singh and asserted her claim to have a say in the future of that state. While she had obtained control over nearly half of the State by force, she had got the way cleared for getting the rest of it, or, at least the Kashmir valley, through other means by getting India committed to plebiscite under the supervision of the U.N.O. Knowing the Muslim mind, as she did, she was reasonably confident of the outcome of a plebiscite whenever it was held.

Diplomatically, she had scored a resounding victory over India. Taking advantage of Pt. Nehru's bunglings and indiscrete statements she had succeeded in putting India, the aggressed and the complainant, on the defensive at the U.N.O. and at the bar of world opinion and had won valuable friends and allies. Having foolishly minimized and underplayed the fact of accession by the Maharaja, which was the only real and legal claim of India to be in Jammu and Kashmir, for reasons which would have made the architect of India's Kashmir policy liable to impeachment in any other country. India was reduced to the pitiable position in which she depended more on the good graces of Sheikh Abdullah and votes of the Communist Bloc rather than on the unassailable right derived from accession and the heroic defence of Kashmir by her armed forces.

This, had the effect of swelling Sheikh Abdullah's head on the one hand and throwing India more and more into the lap of the Communist Bloc to the chagrin of the Western countries, on the other. The dangerous shift that this situation gave to India's foreign policy directly led to her virtual isolation and the Chinese aggression in 1962 which humiliated India in the eyes of the whole world.

Pakistan's gains in terms of territory, human and economic resources and, above, all achievements of important strategic objectives were immense.

The area of the State territories now held by Pakistan comes to about 34,000 square miles out of the total area of 84,471 square miles for the whole State. It includes about 17,000 sq. miles of Gilgit, about 12,000 sq. miles of Baltistan and about five thousand square miles of the Mirpur-Poonch-Muzaffarabad Zone. The total population of this Pakistan occupied part of the State was about 11 and a half lakhs out of a total of 40 lakhs for the whole State according to the 1941 census. It included the population of Gilgit which stood at 1,16,000 in that year.

Though these population figures are not very imposing yet they were important to Pakistan. The Poonchis, Mirpuris and Gilgit's provide fine fighting material. They make good soldiers and seamen. In fact, military service is the main occupation of these people. There were at that time a lakh of demobilized or ex-soldiers in Mirpur and Poonch area. Thousands of them were employed in the Indian navy and mercantile marine as naval ratings or stokers. Being comparatively backward educationally and politically, they were considered to be more amenable to army discipline. This warlike manpower has since been an asset to Pakistan.

Apart from this manpower, Pakistan was able to achieve a major part of its objectives in the State by the occupation of these territories. Pakistan's main contention about the State was that being a Muslim majority unit, it should accede to Pakistan. But the more realistic Pakistani leaders realized the difficulty in obtaining for Pakistan the Hindu and Buddhist majority parts of the State which are directly contiguous to the Indian Union. They, therefore, favored a division of the State on the same basis on which Punjab had been partitioned. Such offers in fact were made by the Muslim Conference leaders to the Dogra leaders of Jammu long before the troubles started there. But the division of the State on the basis of religion was disapproved by the Dogra people of Jammu for that would have meant loss of the Kashmir valley to them. The Kashmiri leaders like Sheikh Abdullah were also opposed to partition of the State on the basis of religion because that would have led to ascendancy of the Muslim Conference and the Punjabi Muslims in Kashmir.

valley as well.

Pakistan had now virtually brought about a division of the State. Three Muslim majority zones of the State were held by her. The only Muslim majority part of the State that still remained out of her control was the Kashmir valley.

From the strategic point of view she had obtained all that she could reasonably hope to get. The first objective of Pakistan in this regard was to cut off the State which she feared might accede to India any day from the N.W.F.P., the tribal area and Afghanistan so that no link up of Pathan home-land with India might be possible. The anxiety of Pakistan to prevent this link up was great because of the growing demand for Pakhtoonistan and the keen interest that was being evinced by Afghanistan in it. Though the Indian leadership had let down the Khan brothers; Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan better known as Frontier Gandhi, who was then in Pakistan's jails and his brother, late Dr. Khan Sahib, who headed the Congress Ministry of N.W.F.P. at the time of Partition-the sympathies of the Indian Public were with the Pathans who had worked shoulder to shoulder with the Indians in their fight against the foreign rule. A direct link between India and Pakhtoonistan and Afghanistan, therefore, would have become a headache for Pakistan. That possibility was removed by the 'de facto' control of Gilgit and the Krishan Ganga basin by her.

Pakistan's control over Gilgit besides preventing a direct contact between India on the one side and Afghanistan and USSR on the other, provided Pakistan with a bargaining counter to secure the sympathy and support of the USA and Britain for herself. Because of its strategic location, Gilgit was of vital importance to the USA in her world wide strategy of containing international communism. That explained the deep interest of USA and Britain in favor of Pakistan retaining control of Gilgit and securing control over Kashmir valley, which also could serve as a major supply base for the advance bases in Gilgit. For the same reasons, the USSR was determined to prevent Kashmir valley passing into Pakistan's hands. Her support to India over Kashmir in the Security Council had been actuated more by her self interest than by sympathy for the Indian point of view.

Control over Gilgit and Baltistan also brought Pakistan in direct touch with SirLkiang province of the expanding Communist Chinese empire. Communist China became interested in securing control over Laddakh after her forcible occupation of Tibet. This has since created a community of interests between Pakistan and China in the dismemberment of Jammu and Kashmir State in such a way as may give Laddakh to China and Kashmir Valley to Pakistan. That explains the Communist Chinese attitude to the Kashmir questions ever since its inception and hobnobbing between her and Pakistan. Thus strategically the territories acquired by Pakistan have proved to be of immense importance to her.

From the economic point of view too these territories have proved to be of great importance to Pakistan. The Mangala headwork of the Upper Jehlum canal, which irrigates a large part of the West Punjab, lies near Mirpur. It flows for about 20 miles within the State territory before entering West Punjab. The economic life of a good portion of West Punjab could be strangled by the destruction of these headworks. Even a breach in the right bank of the canal which flows parallel to the river could render the canal useless to Pakistan. Now, the headworks and the area through which the canal flows came under the direct control of Pakistan. Therefore, the real or imaginary fear of Pakistan about economic strangulation by India was removed.

The economic importance of Mangala, a name derived from goddess Mangala whose temple stands on the top of a cliff surmounted by a fort, has since been further enhanced by a high altitude dam on the Jehlam built with US help. It has become the greatest single power-cum-irrigation project in Pakistan.

Besides the Mangala Project on the Jehlum, the waters of the Krishan Ganga and the Poonch rivers, the major tributaries of the Jehlum flowing through Jammu and Kashmir State, can also be harnessed for producing hydro-electric power at a number of sites.

Furthermore, these territories brought Pakistan in possession of rich sources of timber as well as means of bringing it to the plains. All the rich fresh wealth of Kashmir and Karen is carried to the plains by the Jehlum. This was an important gain in view of the fact that Pakistan has few forests of good timber. The control of these forest areas has assured Pakistan of a regular supply of raw material for her Rosin Factory at Jallo near Lahore, and of other kinds of forest produce. Pakistan, in fact, obtained almost a monopoly of "Kuth", a fragrant medicinal herb, which grows in the forests of Karen and Chilas.

As far as minerals are concerned, little is known so far about this area. But a geological survey is bound to reveal the rich mineral potentialities of these thirty four thousand square miles of mountainous territory. The surveys so far made have revealed the existence of mineral oils in the Poonch area. Lime stone suitable for cement and different types of valuable clays are also known to exist in abundance in these parts.

These gains of Pakistan have proved to be sure and permanent. The people of the occupied areas, who have close linguistic social and cultural ties with the people of the adjoining districts of West Pakistan, have been fully indoctrinated with Pakistan's ideology. They are, therefore, sure to stand by Pakistan in peace or war. The question of plebiscite which has since lost all relevance to the situation has, therefore, never been a headache for Pakistan.

Pakistan's military build up in these areas with the help of warlike and well-trained local population coupled with favorable geographical factors has made the possibility of the reconquest of these areas by India very remote. No local action confined to Jammu and Kashmir State can possibly succeed in dislodging Pakistan from Gilgit which she had since linked with Peshawar by a motorable road. Control of Burzila Pass by Pakistan has made the task of the Indian army in this respect doubly difficult.

Pakistan was not at all bothered by U.N. reactions. She had, in fact, from the beginning used that forum to malign India with total impunity. The fact that she had violated the U.N. Charter by crossing into the territories of Jammu and Kashmir State did not in any way compromise her position at the U.N. She was not bothered about her weak legal position or world opinion, so long as she was in firm possession of the territories concerned. As later events have proved, world opinion or legal quibblings matter only for the weak. The strong who can present the world with a 'fait accompli' can get away with it unless the victim of aggression can mobilise a bigger strength to undo the wrong.

Therefore, she went ahead with consolidating these gains untrammelled by any extraneous considerations or inhibitions. She established her direct control over the northern strategic areas of Gilgit and Baltistan which has since continued to be centrally administered units of Pakistan. In the Western districts of Mirpur-Poonch and Muzaffarabad she had already set up a puppet regime for the purpose of tactical maneuverability at the U.N. She gave this area the name of "Azad" (Independent) Kashmir even though it had nothing to do with the Kashmir region of the state which is cut off from the rest of the State by high Himalayan ranges. She has been systematically Islamising these areas and erasing their Hindu part. For example the name Krishan Ganga river has been changed to "Neel Darya." She has raised many fully trained and equipped new battalions from among the local people which constitute the real striking force of Pakistan in the State.

Having thus acquired and consolidated her position in three out of the four Muslim majority regions of the State, Pakistan began to prepare for the control of the rest of the State. The cessation of hostilities and restoration of normal conditions in the valley enabled her to start a propaganda offensive inside the valley through her numerous agents in the State administration and the Mullah class to rouse communal feelings in the people there.

The state of affairs in the India-held part of the State, in spite of the sound legal and constitutional position of the Government of India, has been just the opposite. The developments there and the policy of the Government of India regarding them have further compromised and weakened the position of India both internally and externally.

The Indian Side

Even though the gains of aggression to Pakistan were valuable and important, the territory still left with India was of much greater extent, value and importance. It included Kashmir Valley and parts of Uri and Tithwal sub-divisions of Muzaffarabad district in Kashmir province, four eastern districts comprising the Dugar region of Jammu province together with the town of Poonch and some neighboring territory along the Cease Fire Line which belonged to the Punjabi speaking Western Zone, most of which had been occupied by Pakistan, and the whole of Laddakh and Kargil area lying between Laddakh and Baltistan proper across the Yojila Pass.

The total area of this territory was about 50,000 sq. miles including about 33,000 sq. miles of Laddakh, about 12,000 sq. miles of Jammu, about 3,000 sq. miles of Kashmir Valley and about 2,000 sq. miles of Uri and Tithwal area.

From the population point of view the Kashmir Valley with its 30 lakh population of which about 27 lakhs are Muslims is the most populous. Next comes Jammu with a population of about 30 lakhs of which about 20 lakhs are Hindus. The Muslim population of Jammu region is mainly concentrated on the West along the Cease Fire Line. Laddakh with a population of about two lakhs of which Buddhists form a large majority is the most sparsely populated.

Jammu and Laddakh being directly contiguous to each other as also to East Punjab and Himachal Pradesh form a compact bloc of about 45,000 sq. miles with a predominantly Hindu or Buddhist population. Kashmir valley and the adjoining areas of Uri and Tithwal form the only compact Muslim majority area on the Indian side of the Cease Fire Line.

Strategically, though not comparable to Gilgit because of its being the meeting ground of international frontiers of Afghanistan, USSR, Communist China and India, the territory held by India is yet of immense importance to her. Being the only link between India and the rest of the State including Kashmir Valley, the Jammu region has the greatest strategic importance for India. Its warlike Dogra population and hilly terrain make it an ideal frontier area separating Indian Punjab from North Western parts of Pakistan and Pakistan held territories of the State.

Gilgit and Baltistan having been lost to Pakistan, Laddakh remained the only window in Indian hands opening into Central Asia. Though the town of Leh had ceased to be the nerve centre of central Asian trade since the incorporation of the central Asian Khanates by USSR and China, yet its importance as a political and military outpost cannot be minimised. The strategic importance of this area for India has since been enhanced manifold by the Communist Chinese occupation of Tibet.

The strategic importance of Kashmir which is essentially a place of natural beauty lies in its being a vast stretch of plain land surrounded by the high Himalayan ranges which make it an ideal

supply and air base for the defense of India's Northern frontiers.

The economic potentiality of this territory is much greater. The magnificent fir and deodar forests of the Jammu region whose valuable timber flows down the Chenab to Akhnoor near Jammu are among the best of their kind in the Himalayas. Saffron is produced in Kashmir Valley and Kishtwar in Jammu. This area also abounds in rare medicinal herbs and other kinds of forest produce. Silk and wool of high quality are also produced in large quantities and processed in the wool and silk factories at Srinagar and Jammu.

The Jammu region, particularly its Reasi area, is very rich in minerals. Large deposits of coal of good quality, bauxite, iron ore and copper and many other minerals have been found in this area. There are rich sapphire mines at Padar near Kishtwar. Lime stone and other clays suitable for cement and ceramics are found in large quantities in the Kandi areas. Laddakh too is known to be rich in minerals though exact assessment must await a detailed geological survey of the area.

Cheap hydro-electric power can be generated to exploit this rich mineral wealth by harnessing the waters of the Chenab and the Ravi and their numerous tributaries. In fact the scope for generating power is immense in the Jammu region. The Salal Scheme on the Chenab near Reasi which had long been under consideration of the the Government of Punjab and Kashmir before partition and the first phase of which has recently been completed by the Government of India can produce enough power to transform the economy of the entire area.

The economic potential of the Kashmir Valley as a tourist resort and as home of deft artisans whose handicraft have a world wide market is equally great. Jammu region also abounds in places like Sannasar and Bhadarwah which can be developed into great tourist centers.

Furthermore all the famous shrines and places of pilgrimage like the holy caves of Shri, Amar Nath and Vaishno Devi, the holy springs of Mattan and Khir Bhawani and great temples of Shankracharya and Martand which provide a base for the emotional attachment of the people of India with the Jammu Kashmir State remain in Indian hands.

Statesmanship and realism demanded that India, while maintaining its legal claim over the whole state, took steps to consolidate her position in these territories.

But India's handling of the Kashmir issue in its internal aspect has been as unrealistic as that of its external aspect in relation to Pakistan and U.N.O. The story of India's bungling in this respect makes a sickening reading from the very beginning.

As discussed in an earlier chapter, one major reason for Maharaja Hari Singh's hesitation in acceding to India was his fear about Nehru's insistence to hand over power to Sheikh Abdullah whose bonafides and motives were thoroughly suspect in his eyes. But the circumstances which forced him to request the Government of India to accept his state's accession left him with no choice but to obey the dictates of the Government of India in this respect. He had to hand over full powers to Sheikh Abdullah and his National Conferences as a pre-condition for the acceptance of his State's accession so that Indian troops could be flown to Srinagar to save it and the rest of the Kashmir Valley from going the Baramula way. Sheikh Abdullah became the Chief Emergency Officer to start with and then Prime Minister of the entire State and not of the Kashmir Valley alone.

This was a great blunder and a grave injustice to the people of Jammu and Laddakh. National Conference in its genesis and growth had remained a purely Kashmiri Organization which depended for its following mainly on anti-Hindu, anti-Dogra and anti-Maharaja feeling which it

had steadily built up since 1930. It had no adherents in Jammu except a small communist cell. The Quit Kashmir movement as discussed earlier was mainly aimed against the people of Jammu. That movement had made it absolutely clear that Sheikh Abdullah was interested in securing control over Kashmir Valley alone and was not in the least interested in other parts of the State. He never aspired nor expected to be put in charge of the Government of the whole State.

He, in fact, was reluctant to come to Jammu and had to be persuaded to come there by Pt. Prem Nath Dogra and other dignitaries of Jammu many days after he had taken charge of the Government of Srinagar. The proper course, therefore, would have been to entrust him with power in Kashmir Valley and give charge of Jammu and Laddakh to popular representatives from these regions.

To make things worse the Government of India began to treat him as a 'de facto' Sultan of the whole state from the very beginning. Instead of having a tight central control over his administration because of the State being a theater of war, the Indian Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, decided to give him such a long rope as would have prompted even a better man and a patriot to hang himself with it. As stated earlier, the Agent General to the Government of India, Kanwar Dalip Singh, who was supposed to watch the interests of India and guide Sheikh Abdullah accordingly was quick to notice the dangerously independent and even anti-Indian attitude of Sheikh Abdullah. He warned the Government of India to exercise a check over him. But instead of heeding his advice he was asked to be guided by Sh. Abdullah. He resigned in disgust.

Sh. Abdullah never had any need for Indian guidance. He had enough communists around him to guide him toward "Independent Kashmir" which suited their overall strategy for a communist revolution in India. With the appointment of Sheikh Abdullah as Chief Emergency Officer for the whole State pending the formation of a regular Government they became the real masters of Kashmir for some time at least. They took charge of all available military stores, commandeered private arms and organized a militia of which such well known Communist leaders as Rajbans Krishan and Ch. Sher Jung become Brigadier and Colonel Commandant respectively. They named the Pratap square of Srinagar as Lal Chowk- red square- and filled all the key administration posts with their own nominees. With the departure of Sh. Abdullah for New York as a member of the Indian Delegation to the U.N.O. Mr. G. M. Sadiq, a fellow traveller, became the virtual head of the Government in Kashmir which further gave a free hand to communists.

It was the time when Communist terrorism miscalled revolution was in full swing in Telengana. To avoid arrest many leading communists had come to Kashmir. Most prominent among them was B.P.L. Bedi, who became a close confidant of Sh. Abdullah. He was reported to have said in 1948 that 'with Soviet Russia at our back we can turn Kashmir into an arsenal for revolutionary movements in India and Pakistan'.

This communist strategy demanded that Sh. Abdullah must repudiate authority of India and work for an independent Kashmir. Even otherwise Sh. Abdullah was inclined to take this line because that suited his ambition to become the sultan of Kashmir.

As a result Sh. Abdullah began to display, from the very beginning, an arrogant disregard for India and stress his own role in the revolutionary changes that had brought him into power.

Such utterances and policies of Sh. Abdullah created a scare in Jammu whose people wanted accession of the State to India to be a real fact rather than a farce. The anti-Dogra tirades of Sh. Abdullah and the repressive and discriminatory policies of his Government coupled with reckless enforcement of the New Kashmir Plan created a lot of discontent against his administration in

Jammu within a few months of the transfer of power to his hands. The arrest of Pt. Prem Nath Dogra and other Praja Parishad leaders further aggravated the situation.

The discontent in Laddakh was no less. The Buddhists there found the new regime not only repressive but also communal in its outlook and approach. As a result, the feeling began to grow in Jammu and Laddakh that they must be freed from the oppressive rule of Sh. Abdullah and his communist agents even if it meant their separation from Kashmir Valley.

Such a situation was not very conducive to the furtherance of the stand that India had taken regarding a popular backing to the accession of the State as a whole to India. The U.N. circles with their already marked pro-Pakistan sympathies could not fail to take notice of this internal situation on the Indian side of the Cease Fire Line. This was reflected in the report of Sir Owen Dixon and subsequent discussions in the Security Council.

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The Storm Center of the World

Bal Raj Madhok

CHAPTER X

THE DIXON PROPOSALS

The Cease Fire eased the situation in so far as it put a stop to the actual fighting. It also removed the fear of the fighting in Kashmir developing into a general Indo- Pak War. But it did not bring the solution of the problem as visualized by the UNCIP in its resolution of August 13, 1948 any nearer. Nothing had been settled about the Truce Agreement and plebiscite which were to follow the Cease Fire in terms of that resolution before India took the initiative to end the shooting War. This put the U.N. Commission in a difficult position. While it appreciated India's self-abnegation in stopping the actual fighting it could not allow the matters to rest there. It, therefore, after waiting for a few months passed a new resolution on January 5, 1949 which detailed the steps to be taken for the implementation of the provisions of its earlier resolution about the Truce Agreement and the plebiscite. To expedite the work it decided to move India and Pakistan to carry on its mediatory efforts to that end.

But neither Pakistan nor India was in a hurry to oblige the U.N. Commission. Pakistan wanted to consolidate her position in the territories acquired by her and was in no mood to take any risk by withdrawing the 30 battalions of local troops raised from among the people of these territories and allowing the writ of the lawful Government of Jammu & Kashmir to run, even nominally, over the whole state on which India insisted. The divergence between the views of the two sides regarding demilitarization and administrative control over the territories occupied by Pakistan was so great that it took them seven months even to finalize the Cease Fire Line.

The UNCIP therefore began to veer round the idea of arbitration by a third party regarding the disputed points about demilitarization which stood in the way of signing of the Truce Agreement and induction of a plebiscite Administration for which post the security council had nominated Admiral Chester Nimitz of the USA. Accordingly, it presented to the Governments of India and Pakistan on August 29, 1949 its proposal about submitting to arbitration their differences regarding the implementation of Part II of the resolution of August 13, 1948. As if by prior arrangement, President Truman of the USA and Premier Attlee of the U.K. wrote to the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan about the same time to accept this suggestion about arbitration.

The Government of Pakistan accepted the suggestion but the Government of India rejected it on the plea that the outstanding issue of disbanding and disarming of "Azad" Kashmir forces was a matter not for arbitration but "for affirmative and immediate decision".

Though the arbitration proposals thus fell through, it hardened the attitude of the USA and the UK against India.

The U.N. Commission therefore felt that any further efforts at mediation would be useless and decided to return to New York and report its failure to the Security Council. This it did on December 12, 1949. The majority report was signed by four of the five members. While admitting the Commission's failure in the task entrusted to it, it suggested that the "Security Council should designate as its representative, a single individual who should proceed to the subcontinent with the broad authority from the Council to endeavour to bring the two Governments together on all unresolved issues".

Dr. Chyde, the representative of Czechoslovakia, submitted a separate minority report in which he charged the U.N. Secretariat, the USA and the UK with interference in the work of the UNCIP, suggested that a new mediation organ really independent and untrammelled by outside interference should be created and asserted that the Security Council as a whole alone could be such an organ.

The presentation of these reports and the charges levelled by Dr. Chyde about interference by the U.S.A. and the UK in the working of the UNCIP made the division of the Security Council between the Western and Eastern Bloc on the question of Kashmir absolutely clear. It was now evident that the Kashmir issue had got caught up in the cold war and that a dispassionate study and solution of the problem on its own merits was going to become more and more difficult. This fact began to further influence the foreign policy of the Government of India in favor of the Communist bloc which in its turn made the attitude of the Western bloc more and more sympathetic to Pakistan's point of view.

The security council, after debating these reports for many weeks, decided by a majority vote on March 14, 1950, to send a single U.N. representative to assist in the demilitarization Programme and subsequent steps for organizing a plebiscite. Sir Owen Dixon, a retired Judge of the Australian High Court, was chosen for the purpose. Earlier, the names of Admiral Chester Nimitz and Mr. Ralph Bunche were proposed but had to be dropped because of India's opposition.

Sir Owen Dixon arrived in India on May 27, 1950. He immediately undertook a comprehensive tour of Jammu & Kashmir State on both sides of the Cease Fire Line and held discussions with local leaders besides the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan. On August 22, 1950 he announced that he had come to the conclusion that there was no immediate prospect of India and Pakistan composing their differences and that he would shortly report to the Security Council. This he did on September 15, 1950.

Sir Owen Dixon's report was the first judicial report on the state of Affairs in Jammu & Kashmir as it had developed since the beginning of Pakistani invasion in October, 1947. He made some practical suggestions about the solution of the problem in the light of the actual realities of the situation on both sides of the cease-fire Line.

He was the first U.N. representative to state in unequivocal terms that the crossing of the frontier of Jammu & Kashmir State by Pakistani invaders on October 22, 1947, and the entry of regular Pakistan Army into Kashmir in May, 1948 were contrary to international law.

He was again the first U.N. representative to clearly grasp the fact that Jammu & Kashmir State is just a heterogeneous conglomeration of territories under the political power of one Maharaja and that it was not really a unit geographically, demographically or economically. He, therefore, concluded that "if as a result of one overall plebiscite the state in its entirety passed to India, there would be a large movement of Muslims and another refugee problem would arise for Pakistan. If the result favored Pakistan a refugee problem, although not of such dimensions, would arise for India. Almost all this would be avoided by partition. Great areas of the State are

unequivocally Muslims. Other areas are predominantly Hindu. There is a further area which is Buddhist. No one doubts the sentiments of the great majority of the inhabitants of these areas. The interests of the people, the justice as well as avoiding another refugee problem, all point to the wisdom of adopting partition as the principle of settlement and of abandoning that of an overall plebiscite".

In the light of above conclusions he suggested the following two alternatives to an overall plebiscite:

(1) A plebiscite be taken "by sections or areas" and the allocation of each section or area be made according to the result of the vote.

(2) Without holding a plebiscite, areas certain to vote for India and those certain to vote for Pakistan "be allotted accordingly and the plebiscite be confined only to the uncertain area". The "uncertain area" according to Sir. Dixon appeared to be the "Vale of Kashmir and perhaps some adjacent country."

This plan of holding a partial plebiscite in a limited area consisting of United Nations officers headed by the Plebiscite Administrator with powers to "exclude troops of any description. If however, they decided that for any purpose troops were necessary, they could request the parties to provide them."

He further suggested that the Security Council should pull itself out of the dispute and let the initiative pass to the parties concerned. He, however, stressed the necessity for the reduction in armed forces holding the cease-fire Line to the normal needs of a peace time frontier.

Keeping in view the actual state of affairs on both sides of cease-fire Line and the Indian commitment about plebiscite to determine the will of the people about accession, Dixon's proposals appeared to be eminently reasonable and practical even though they militated against the legal and constitutional right of India over the whole of the State. They left the gains of aggression which included three out of the four Muslim majority regions of the State in the hands of Pakistan and gave her a fair opportunity to secure control over the fourth- the Valley of Kashmir - if the people of that region really wanted to put their lot with her. They gave India an un-disputed control over Jammu and Laddakh and provided her an opportunity to put the loyalty of Sheikh Abdullah and Kashmiri Muslims for whom she had done so much, to a fair test. To confine the plebiscite to the Valley with its small and compact area was definitely to be preferred to an overall-plebiscite in the whole of the State from every point of view.

But there was one snag in these proposals. The suggestion to replace the lawfully constituted authority in the Valley by the U.N. administrators with the right to invite troops of both India and Pakistan if necessary for the purpose of maintenance of law and order could not be justified on any ground. It amounted to absolute repudiation of India's special position emanating from the lawful accession of the State to her and bestowal upon Pakistan, the aggressor who had already obtained rich spoils, an equal status and right over Kashmir.

The Pakistan Government rejected the Dixon proposals on the plea that they "meant a breach on India's part of the agreement that the destinies of Jammu & Kashmir State as a whole should be decided by a plebiscite taken over the entire state". But this rejection was more tactical than genuine because there could not have been a better proposal from the Pakistan point of view.

But it was not so easy for India to accept these proposals. It would have amounted to an implicit acceptance by her that the accession of the State to India had no legal and constitutional validity

and that the State should be partitioned on the same basis on which British India had been partitioned earlier. Further, doubts had begun to assail the mind of Pt. Nehru as well about the advisability of putting the Kashmiri Muslims into the ordeal of a plebiscite in which, whenever held, religious and communal considerations would outweigh all other considerations. Taya Zinkin, the representative of "Manchester Guardian" of London, reported Pt. Nehru as having told her on June 30, 1950, in answer to her question whether he would accept the "status quo" with plebiscite confined to the Valley of Kashmir, that he would not agree to a plebiscite so long as Pakistan held a part of the State because the people of Kashmir were "timorous." Pakistan had agreed that it would not canvass in Kashmir on religious grounds but he could not run the risk of their breaking this understanding. Compared with the risk of communal conflagration he did not care about world opinion, but added that "of course if the Kashmiris want a plebiscite to be fought on economic and not mind you, religious grounds they can have it. But I shall never allow so long as I live a plebiscite over cow's urine and all that. It would undo the whole of communal harmony." 1

However, according to Sir Owen Dixon, the Prime Minister of India was in agreement with the general principles underlying his proposals, viz., area where there was no doubt as to the wishes of the people going to India or Pakistan and plebiscite being confined to the areas where there was doubt about the result of voting

provided the demarcation line was drawn with due regard to geographical features and requirements of an international boundary. But Nehru was strongly opposed to Dixon's proposal about supersession of the existing Kashmir Government and bringing in of Pakistani troops in the Valley if the plebiscite Administration felt keeping of such troops there necessary.

There are reasons to believe that had Sir Dixon and afterward the Security Council adopted a flexible approach in regard to the suggestion about suppression of lawful Kashmir Government and admission of Pakistan's troops into the valley if the Plebiscite Administrator so desired, his proposals might have proved a workable basis for a final settlement in spite of the immediate adverse reactions of India and Pakistan to it.

But the Security Council which met on February 21, 1951 to consider the report of Sir Owen Dixon instead of finding out ways and means of making the Dixon proposals acceptable to the two parties, decided by a resolution sponsored jointly by the UK and the USA to send another U.N. representative to India and Pakistan in succession to Sir Owen Dixon "to effect the demilitarization of the State of Jammu and Kashmir on the basis of the demilitarization proposals made by Sir Dixon in his report with any modifications which the U.N. representative deems advisable, and to present to the Government of India and Pakistan detailed plans for carrying out plebiscite in the State of Jammu and Kashmir". This resolution was passed with slight modification in spite of the opposition of India by a majority vote on March 30, 1951. None voted against it but the USSR and Yugoslavia abstained.

In accordance with this resolution the Security Council appointed Dr. Frank Graham of the USA as its new representative for India and Pakistan. Dr. Graham who first came to India and Pakistan in June, 1951 carried on endless discussions with the Prime Ministers of both countries about the quantum of armed forces to be retained by the two sides in Kashmir after a demilitarization in terms of the resolution of August 13, 1948 had been brought about. Having failed to make any headway, he suggested direct negotiations between the two governments. They began at a joint conference of the two countries at ministerial level at Geneva in August, 1952, and were later, after a change of Government in Pakistan following the assassination of Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan, continued at Karachi and New Delhi at the Prime Minister's level.

The joint communique issued on August 20, 1953, after the conclusion of the talks between the two Prime Ministers at New Delhi gave the impression that some headway had been made toward a negotiated settlement. According to the communique the Prime Ministers agreed to consider directly the preliminary issues like the quantum of forces to be kept by both sides in Kashmir and to that end decided to appoint military and other experts to advise them in regard to these issues. A provisional time-table for implementation of their decisions was also drawn up according to which the Plebiscite Administrator was to be inducted into office by April, 1954.

But before any concrete steps could be taken to implement the decisions announced in the joint communique, a new turn was given to the whole problem by the military pact between Pakistan and USA under which Pakistan began to receive massive military aid from the USA and the internal developments in Kashmir which culminated in the overthrow of Sh. Abdullah and installation of a new Government headed by Bakshi Gulam Mohammed and ratification of accession by the Kashmir Constituent Assembly.

FOOTNOTE

1. "Reporting India" by Taya Zinkin, Pg. 206.

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The Storm Center of the World

Bal Raj Madhok

CHAPTER XI

SHADOW OF COLD WAR

The developments leading to the dismissal and arrest of Sh. Abdullah in August 1953 and the signing of USA - Pak Military Pact early in 1954 were closely linked up with the cold war politics of the two power blocs. They in their turn contributed to a further intensification of the cold war in regard to Kashmir which made an objective approach and a negotiated settlement of the problem inside or outside the U.N.O. all the more difficult.

Internally, these developments were closely linked up with Sh. Abdullah's personal ambition to secure absolute power for himself in the Kashmir valley. To achieve this end, he leaned first on the Communists who gave him the idea of independent Kashmir but later moved toward the west, particularly the USA to the great chagrin of the Communists.

The opportunity to cultivate the friendship of the Western leaders and secure their sympathy for his pet plan was provided to him by his successive visits to Europe and the USA as a member of the Indian delegation to the United Nations. The ruling circles in the USA had already veered round to the idea of a partition of Jammu and Kashmir between India and Pakistan more or less on the basis of 'status quo' with freedom for Kashmir valley to decide about its own future through a plebiscite under U.N. auspices. This fitted in well with Sh. Abdullah's own ambition. He therefore, felt encouraged to give out his mind in an interview to Michael Davidson of Sunday Observer and New Scotsman in May 1949. He was reported to have said, "Accession to either side cannot bring peace. We want to live in friendship with both Dominions. Perhaps a middle path between them with economic cooperation with each will be the only way of doing it".

The Government of India was taken aback by this statement of Sh. Abdullah. Sardar Patel, who had by that time integrated over 500 princely States but had scrupulously refrained from taking interest in the handling of Kashmir problem because of Pt. Nehru's insistence upon treating it as his close preserve, for once thought it necessary to put his foot down on Sh. Abdullah's ambition. His one frown made Sh. Abdullah realise that he could not take support of New Delhi for granted.

The incident made Abdullah uneasy and fearful of Sardar Patel who as Home Minister was getting authentic reports. About Sh. Abdullah's activities and policies which showed that he had scant respect for India's wider national interests and the aspirations of the people of Jammu and Ladakh regions. But commitment of the Government of India about plebiscite had emboldened him so much that he began to act as an arbiter. He retaliated by expelling Colonel Hassan Walia, the chief of Indian Intelligence outfit in Kashmir. It was a direct challenge to Sardar Patel who as Home Minister was in charge of central intelligence agencies. He summoned Abdullah to Delhi

for explanation. Sh. Abdullah took his patron Pt. Nehru along with him when he met the Sardar at his residence.

According to Sh. Abdullah, Sardar Patel gave him a bit of his mind. He told Pt. Nehru in his presence that India had lost the game, and should better pullout of the valley. 1

Being a nationalist and realist Sardar Patel had better grasp of the developing situation in Jammu and Kashmir state particularly after the publication of Dixon proposals. If he had his way he would have put Sh. Abdullah in his place, integrated Jammu and Ladakh regions with India and allowed Abdullah and his Kashmiri followers to fend for themselves in the valley. Plebiscite, if held, would have exposed secularism of Sh. Abdullah and his flock. The valley then might have gone the way of other Muslim majority regions of the State. Sh. Abdullah would have then cooled his heels in some jail of Pakistan.

The death of Sardar Patel toward the end of 1950 removed from the Indian scene the one man who could have kept Sh. Abdullah's ambition in check and cleared the mess that Pt. Nebru had made in Kashmir by his unrealistic and erratic handling of the problem from the very beginning. Sardar Patel, himself told the present writer when the latter requested him to do something about Kashmir, that he would set things right there in one month, but he was not prepared to take the initiative unless Pt. Nebru specifically requested him to do so. Whether it was gentleman's agreement between the two giants of the Indian politics not to interfere with each other's sphere of activity or deliberate self-denial on the part of Sardar Patel, it is difficult to say. But the fact remains that while Sardar Patel, was able to integrate 500 and add princely states including Hyderabad with great efficiency and success within two years. Pt. Nehru made a mess of Kashmir in spite of the huge sacrifices in men and material and complete and unstinted support of the nation to him in the matter. With the passage of time even the worst critics of Sardar Patel have begun to admit that left to him the Kashmir issue would have been settled long ago in keeping with national honor and national interests. That will remain in the eyes of history, which is no respecter of personalities. The measure of Sardar Patel's greatness as a statesman and administrator as compared to Pt. Nehru whose handling of Kashmir issue will go down in history as an epitome of the failure of a man who with the best of opportunities and favorable circumstances made a mess of everything he handled.

Deterioration in the internal situation of the State after that was as rapid as it was disconcerting for India. Elections to the Constituent Assembly of the State were held in 1951. But they were so conducted that most of the candidates of the Praja Parishad, the only Opposition party in the State, were eliminated at the nomination stage by rejecting their nomination papers. The rest were forced to withdraw for want of assurance that elections would be fair and free. As a result, all the 75 nominees of Sh. Abdullah's National Conference got elected unopposed.

The Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir was supposed to ratify the accession of the State to India and adopt the Indian Constitution, in the rnaking of which Sh. Abdullah and three other representatives from the State had an equal hand, for the State as well. But Sh. Abdullah gave it quite a different idea of its powers and scope from the very beginning. He told it that it was "one hundred percent sovereign" and that "no Parliament, be it that of India or of any other country, has authorization here." Referring to independence as a possible solution he observed on March 25, 1952, "suppose for the sake of argument that the people do not ratify this accession the position that will follow, would not be that as a matter of course Kashmir becomes a part of Pakistan. No, that would not happen. That cannot happen legally or constitutionally. What would happen in such eventuality would be that the State would regain the status which it enjoyed im mediately preceeding the accession. Let us be clear about it."

Simultaneously, he began to speak in the same strain outside the Assembly. His main object thus appeared to be to put pressure on the Government of India to make definite commitment about same sort of independence for Kashmir before the Constituent Assembly ratified accession. Thus he secured a free hand to abolish the Dogra ruling dynasty and have a separate flag and Constitution for the State. Accordingly the hereditary Dogra ruler as the head of the State was replaced by an elected president called Sadar-i-Riyasat, the red flag of the National Conference was adopted as the State flag and machinery was set up for drafting a separate Constitution for the State while the question of ratification of accession was kept pending.

These separatist moves and utterances of Sh. Abdullah sent a wave of resentment in Jammu and Ladakh as also in the rest of India. The Praja Parishad launched a movement for the integration of the State with the rest of India like other acceding States with a common Constitution, a common President and a common flag. The popular discontent against discriminatory economic and administrative policies of Sh. Abdullah's Government with regard to Jammu added strength to this movement which spread to every nook and corner of Jammu region. Thousands of people courted arrest and about two score persons were shot dead for hoisting the Indian tricolour on the State buildings in Jammu and for raising the slogans-

"Ek Desh Men Do Vidhan
Ek Desh Men Do Nishan

Ek Desh Men Do Pradhan
Nahin Challenge-Nahin Challenge."

(Two Constitutions, two Presidents and two Flags in the same country will not be tolerated.)

The patriotic sufferings of the people of Jammu found sympathetic response from nationalist India spearheaded by the late Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerji who, ever since his resignation from the Nehru Cabinet in April 1950, had been unofficially acclaimed as Leader of the Opposition even though his own party, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, could return only three members to the first Parliament of free India elected in 1952. He took up the cudgels on behalf of the Praja Parishad inside and outside the Indian Parliament. Having failed to persuade Pt. Nehru to sit round a table with the representatives of the people of Jammu and Ladakh and meet their genuine and patriotic objections to the separatist policies of Sh. Abdullah, he decided to extend the Satyagraha started by the Praja Parishad in Jammu to the rest of India.

Sh. Abdullah, who had the full backing of Pt. Nehru, instead of relenting became more obdurate and aggressive. He intensified repression and many people were killed for hoisting the national flag. As the reports of this repression travelled out of the State, Shyama Prasad Mookerji decided to visit Jammu and see things for himself. He asserted that as a citizen of free India and a Member of the Parliament he was free to go anywhere in the country without any kind of permit and, therefore, proceeded toward Jammu without an entry permit in May 1953. It was expected that he would be arrested by the Government of India for this defiance. But instead he was allowed to cross the Ravi bridge at Madhopar and enter the State to be arrested by the State authorities. This was arranged deliberately to keep him out of the jurisdiction of the Indian Supreme Court which would have surely released him on a reference being made to it.

Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerji along with Vaidya Guru Dutt, a leading physician and well known writer, who accompanied him as his personal physician were taken to Srinagar and detained there. After about a month, on June 23, 1953, Dr. Mookerji died there in mysterious circumstances. Unofficial probe pointed to medical murder. It sent a wave of resentment all over India.

In the meantime within the National Conference as also in Sh. Abdullah's Cabinet a rift was developing. The pro-Communist elements which had been the staunchest protagonists of the independence for Kashmir had been alarmed by Sh. Abdullah's tilt toward Anglo-American camp which had become very marked after his last visit to Paris toward the end of 1951. Sh. Abdullah, it appeared, had realized that his dream of an independent Kashmir was more likely to come true with the help of the Anglo-American bloc which dominated the U.N.O. and the Security Council than the Communist bloc. He had therefore, begun to shift his allegiance from his Communist friends inside and outside Kashmir to the Western countries. As the Praja Parishad movement for fuller integration of the State with the rest of India gathered momentum, he began to rouse the communal sentiments in Kashmir in the name of Kashmiri nationalism and demonstrate his indifference and disdain for the susceptibilities of the people of Jammu and the Government of India in different ways. The trend became particularly evident after the visit of Mr. Adlai Stevenson to Srinagar early in May 1953. This alarmed the pro-Communist Ministers of his cabinet. They now turned against him. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, the right-hand man of Sh. Abdullah, joined hands with them. These internal developments coupled with the pressure from outside resulting from Dr. Mookerji's martyrdom made Sh. Abdullah desperate. But before he could show his hand by dismissing the dissident Ministers and making a formal declaration of his plan about independent Kashmir, Yuvraj Karan Singh, the only son of Maharaja Hari Singh, who had been made 'Sadar-i-Riyasat' - head of State - after the abolition of the hereditary rule of the Dogra dynasty dismissed Sh. Abdullah and commissioned Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed to form a new Cabinet. Sh. Abdullah was soon after arrested under Defence of Kashmir Rules.

This sudden turn of events took by surprise both Pakistan and the USA which had begun to lay great hopes on Sh. Abdullah for a solution of the Kashmir problem suiting their ends. Their chagrin was clear from the hostile comments in their press.

The Communists, inside India and outside, on the other hand, hailed the overthrow of Sh. Abdullah as a victory for themselves and started denouncing the USA in the strongest terms. They thus successfully exploited the popular feeling roused by the Jan Sangh and Sh. Abdullah's separatist policies for creating an anti-American hysteria in India.

The pro-Communist bias of India's neutralist foreign policy and the persistent support given by the USSR and other Communist countries to India's stand on Kashmir in the Security Council coupled with the failure of Indian external publicity to properly educate the American public opinion about the justice of India's case contributed to Pakistan's success in creating a powerful anti-India lobby in the U.S. press and Congress. Many Americans genuinely began to feel that India was moving toward the Communist bloc and that Pakistan could be an asset, particularly because of the strategic situation of Gilgit for containing the spread of Communism in Asia if it could be persuaded to join the Baghdad Pact which was later re-Christened as Central Treaty Organization (CENTO).

At the same time there was a visible pro-American shift in Pakistan's foreign policy particularly after the assassination of its Prime Minister, Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan in 1952. Even otherwise, the very genesis of Pakistan demanded that her foreign policy should run counter to that of India. Having been born out of hatred for the Hindus and Hindusthan, Pakistan's very existence required that India was presented to her people as their chief enemy and everything was done to strengthen Pakistan vis-a-vis India.

By the end of 1953, it became evident that negotiations for a military pact between Pakistan and the USA were moving toward a successful conclusion. The signing of the pact was formally announced early in 1954.

India reacted very strongly to this pact which meant substantial augmentation of military strength of Pakistan with free supplies of armaments from the USA. Pt. Nehru referred to this situation in his letter of March 5, 1954, to Mr. Mohammed Ali, the Pakistan Premier. He wrote "the U.S. decision to give this aid has changed the whole context of Kashmir issue and the long talks we have had about this matter have little relation to the new facts which flow from this aid...." It changed the whole approach to the Kashmir problem. It takes it out from the region of peaceful approach for a friendly settlement by bringing in the pressure of arms."

Pakistan on its part strongly resented the declarations of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed after his assumption of power that accession of Jammu and Kashmir State to India was full, final and irrevocable. The actual ratification of accession by the Kashmir Constituent Assembly soon after further irritated her.

As a result, the area of disagreement about the Quantum of forces to be retained by either side which appeared to have been considerably narrowed by the direct talks of the two premiers became wider than ever before. Pt. Nehru insisted that in the new situation created by the abundant supply of military aid to Pakistan from the USA, "what we said at a previous stage about the quantum of force had little relevance. We can take no risks now as we were prepared to take previously and we must retain full liberty to keep such forces and military equipment in the Kashmir State as we may consider necessary in view of this new threat to us."

Direct negotiations having thus foundered on the rock of U. S. Pak Military Pact, Pakistan Premier, Mr. Mohammed Ali, informed Pt. Nehru in his letter of September 21, 1954, that "in the circumstances I am bound to conclude that there is no scope left for further direct negotiations between you and me for the settlement of this dispute. This case, therefore, must revert to the Security Council."

Pakistan, however, took two and a half years after the failure of direct negotiations to request the Security Council to take up the Kashmir issue once again. The request was made by Malik Feroz Khan Noon, the Pakistan Foreign Minister on January 2, 1957, and the Security Council resumed debate on Kashmir after an interval of nearly five years on the 16th of the same month.

Meanwhile, the situation inside the State as also the attitude and approach of both the countries to the problem had undergone a lot of change. Within the State, the most significant development was the unanimous decision of the Constituent Assembly to ratify the accession and the specific declaration in the Constitution adopted by it on November 17, 1956, that "the State of Jammu and Kashmir is and shall be an integral part of the Union of India." This strengthened the hands of the Government of India which could assert with justification that the people of the State had given their democratic verdict in favor of accession to India.

While the unanimous decision of the Constituent Assembly strengthened the Indian position, the re-organization of "Plebiscite Front and Political Conference" by pro-Abdullah elements in Kashmir valley and their open demand for a plebiscite and accession to Pakistan strengthened the hands of Pakistan politically. Militarily, her position had vastly improved because of the massive flow of the latest armaments of all types together with military experts from the USA. As a result, the attitude of the rulers of Pakistan became more aggressive. Apart from carrying on a diplomatic offensive against India all over the world, they began to actively organize and encourage acts of sabotage through their agents within the State.

As a reaction, India began to lean more and more upon the USSR and her satellites which gave a further pro-Communist tilt to her foreign policy. The visit to India of Marshal Bulganin, the USSR Premier, and Mr. Khrushchev, the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet

Union, toward the end of 1955 and their open declaration at Srinagar of December 10, 1955 "that the question of Kashmir as one of the States of the Republic of India had already been decided by the people of Kashmir" made the alignment of the USSR with India on the question of Kashmir as explicit as that of the USA with Pakistan. The cold war had now entered Kashmir itself. It began to be looked upon as one of the storm centers of the world like West Berlin where the interests of the two giants clashed directly.

The situation forced Pt. Nehru to do some re-thinking about the stand he had taken regarding Kashmir. Doubts as said earlier, had already begun to assail him about the wisdom of the offer about plebiscite which was bound to be influenced by religious considerations whenever and however it was held. The behavior of Sh. Abdullah also shook him. The tone of his utterances about Kashmir therefore changed. He began to voice his opposition to plebiscite openly and the Indian Home Minister, late Pt. Pant, declared that Kashmir was an integral and irrevocable part of India.

This change of attitude was reflected in the stand taken by the Chief Indian delegate, Krishna Menon, when the Security Council resumed debate on Kashmir. India for the first time explicitly charged Pakistan of direct aggression and declared that she had no obligation to discharge till the aggression was vacated. India's voluntary offer to consult the people, he said had been redeemed through elections to the constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir whose actions were "declaratory and not creative." The legal right of India over the whole of Jammu and Kashmir State, he asserted, flowed from the lawful accession of the State by Maharaja Hari Singh which was full, final and irrevocable.

Some hope of a negotiated settlement outside the UN rose once again after the Military coup in Pakistan which brought Marshal Ayub Khan to the helm of affairs in Pakistan in 1959. As a soldier he had a greater consciousness of the indivisibility of the Indo-Pak defense against possible aggression from Communist China to meet which Indo-Pak amity was essential. He needed it to stabilize his own position as well. Furthermore, he was in a position in the early days of his new found power to take a decision even against the popular sentiments of the Pakistani people. He was even more keen for the settlement of the Canal Waters dispute in which India had a whip hand over Pakistan. Had Indian diplomacy shown any grasp of realities, it would have insisted upon a package deal embracing all Indo-Pak disputes such as the Canal Waters, Kashmir, evacuee property, partition debt and treatment of the Hindu minority in East Pakistan. But Pt. Nehru bungled once again. A Canal Water Treaty was signed at Karachi in 1960 which gave Pakistan much more favorable terms than suggested by the World Bank Award.

With that ended, the short lived Indo-Pak détente brought about more by personal relations between Mr. Rajeshwar Dayal, the Indian High Commissioner at Karachi, and Marshal Ayub who happened to know each other well since pre-partition days than by a real change of heart on both sides. The old game of mutual accusation began once again. Communist Russia saw in the military regime of Marshal Ayub a greater threat to her position in Asia and, therefore, became more vociferous in her support to India over Kashmir. She began to use her veto to prevent any resolution to which India was opposed, being passed by the Security Council.

This reduced the discussions in the Security Council to just debating bouts between itriolic Krishna Menon of India and suave and swift Zaffarullah Khan of Pakistan who began to exploit that world forum to malign India by repeating baseless charges against her which were given wide publicity all over the world.

As a result, world opinion began to be influenced in favor of Pakistan. There could be no greater condemnation of the Indian Foreign policy and its exponents than the people all over the world

have a greater understanding and appreciation of Pakistan's point of view about Kashmir than that of India in spite of the truth and justice of the Indian case.

While these pointless exercises in histrionics were going on in New York, Communist China had starated fishing in the troubled waters of Kashmir cutting across the cold war politics of both USA and the USSR.

The entry of Communist China on the Kashmir stage as a third claimant to large chunks of its territories introduced a new factor in the Kashmir situation; it gave a new turn to the Kashmir problem.

FOOTNOTE

1. Atish-i-Chinar, Page 513.

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The Storm Center of the World

Bal Raj Madhok

CHAPTER XII

THE CHINESE FACTOR

The Chinese interest in Jammu & Kashmir State territories swelled directly from her expansion and absorption of the Central Asian Khanates and Tibet, lying to the North and North-East of Jammu Kashmir State, in the Chinese Empire. This expansion had been going on for centuries past through the peculiar Chinese method of creating the myth of Chinese suzerainty over all the smaller States situated on China's periphery which had the misfortune of entering into any kind of relationship, voluntarily or involuntarily, with the Chinese imperial Court at Peking. The Khanates of Tashkand and Yarkand, which were at one time flourishing outposts of India's Cultural Empire as is evident from the Sanskrit origin of these names, are inhabited by Uighur. The Kirghiz, Tartar, Tajik and Kazakh tribes of nomadic herdsmen of Turkish origin had been converted to Islam in the wake of Arab and Turkish expansion. Ethnically they represent a mixture of Indo-Aryan and Mongol stocks. They had come under pressure of Czarist Russia which began to move fast in Central Asia after her failure to expand south because of her defeat in the Crimean War of 1854. To checkmate Russian plans of expansion and keep this area within their own sphere of influence for the protection of their imperial interests in India, the British deliberately encouraged China, which was then too weak and decrepit to pose a threat to British interests, to assert its suzerainty over these Khanates to prevent their absorption by Russia. Thus began that rivalry between Russia and China for controlling Mongolia and Central Asian Khanates which has continued ever since. The Chinese in keeping with their well known method of signification re-Christened the area controlled by them as Sinkiang.

The situation in Sinkiang remained precarious for China so long as she was weak and divided. But with the establishment of a communist regime in China in 1949, the Chinese Communists extended their effective ways over Sinkiang through ruthless repression. This resulted in a lot of local discontent and violent outbursts such as that of the Kazakhs in 1949. But, Communist China consolidated her position in Sinkiang by the early fifties. The Indian and British Consulates in this area were closed and a bamboo curtain was put between it and the rest of the world. As a result the traditional trade between India and Yarkand and Kashghar of which Leh was the main centre virtually came to an end.

The story of Sinkiang was repeated in Tibet soon after. Unlike the small and warring Khanates of Central Asia, now divided between Russian Turkestan and Chinese Turkestan (Sinkiang), Tibet had been for at least two thousand years an independent State with a distinct personality and definite international boundaries, though its cultural influence extended far beyond them. With the establishment of the Manchu dynasty in China in the 17th Century, informal relationship between China and Tibet based on a personal relationship of a religious preceptor and a lay

patron between the Dalai Lama and the Manchu emperor began. Later, the Chinese Government tried to derive some kind of a Chinese supremacy over Tibet from this relationship which the successive Tibetan Government went on repudiating and resisting to the best of their capacity and strength.

Early in the 20th century Czarist Russia sought to gain some influence at Lhasa through Dorjief, a Mongolian Buddhist priest. To counteract the suspected Russian influence, the British forced their way into Tibet in 1903 through a Military Mission led by Colonel Younghusband. The Lhasa Convention of 1904 gave the British a special position in Tibet in respect of trade and other matters. But to protect themselves against the Russian charge of aggression and to keep Russian influence, which was what really mattered for the British at that time out of Tibet, the British in a way resurrected the myth of Chinese suzerainty over Tibet which in the words of Younghusband himself was just a "farce" and "a political affectation".

Even this farce of Chinese suzerainty was destroyed in 1911 when the Manchu regime was overthrown by Dr. Sun Yat Sen's revolutionary movement. The Tripartite Simla Conference of 1913-14 in which the representatives of China, Tibet and British Government of India met on equal footing to settle Tibet-China frontier finally buried the myth of Chinese suzerainty over Tibet which then began to function as a full, independent State according to known international usage and practice.

With the withdrawal of the British from India in August 1947 all treaty obligations and commitments of the British Indian Government in respect of India's neighbors devolved upon the Government of free India. Sinkiang and Tibet flanked India in the North from the Pamirs to Burma. Pakistan nowhere came in contact with either Sinkiang or Tibet. The interests of free India demanded that Chinese influence was kept out of these strategic border States as far as possible. Sinkiang was then in a ferment. But it is difficult to say what effective help India could have extended to Nationalist Kazakhs and Uighurs in their battle for freedom against Communist China.

The situation in regard to Tibet was different. India which had inherited special rights and obligations in Tibet was expected both on moral grounds as well as in the interests of her national security to help Tibet to preserve her freedom so that she might continue to be a buffer between India and China. She could have achieved this end by helping Tibet to secure membership on U.N.O. or by securing guarantee of non-interference in Tibet from the Communist Government of China before she gave recognition to it in 1949.

But Pt. Nehru, the sole architect of India's foreign policy, would not allow such mundane considerations to influence his policy towards his new found friends of Communist China. Like the proverbial fools who rush in where the angels fear to tread, the great Pandit of India not only failed to get any assurance from Communist China in 1949 but, what is worse, did nothing to prevent her from committing flagrant aggression against a weak and peace loving Tibet in 1950. The argument that India was not in a position to halt Chinese aggression in Tibet in 1950 is fallacious and misleading. India with her three military posts within Tibet and with the support of the free world could have surely and effectively checkmated the Communist Chinese designs over Tibet at that time. Any sacrifices in men and material that India might have been required to make to save Tibet then would have been much less than the sacrifices she has made and will be required to make in future for shirking her responsibility in 1950.

Pt. Nehru's bungling in regard to Tibet like his bungs in Kashmir did not end there. After having made a gift of Tibet to China with all the destruction of monasteries and genocide that followed it in the name of peace, he started such a campaign of Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai-ism that

any objective assessment of Chinese aims in occupying Tibet, its fast signification through settlement of large number of Chinese there and building of large military cantonments all along the Indian frontier began to be pooh-poohed by the Indian Press and Political elite. Nehru Chou fraternization culminated in the so-called "Panch-Sheel" Treaty of 1954 between India and China regarding Tibet; "Panch Sheel" literally meant five norms of good conduct, viz. mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual non- aggression, mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peace ful co-existence.

By this Treaty India gave de jure recognition to a de facto aggressive occupation of Tibet by Communist China and also surrendered all the special rights including that of running Tibet's postal, telegraph and telephone services and stationing troops at a number of places within Tibet inherited by her from the British Government of India. It was a great diplomatic victory for China and an unpardonable blunder on the part of the Indian Government. At one stroke it converted the Indo- Tibetan frontier into an India-China frontier. While signing this death warrant for Tibet and invitation to Communist China to explore fresh fields for expansion across the Himalayas, the Indian Prime Minister failed to get even an unequivocal acceptance from China of the age-old Indo-Tibet frontier the Eastern sector of which had come to be known as the McMahon Line after the British officer who first surveyed it.

The story of Chinese aggression against India begins with the signing of this Treaty which was aptly described in the Indian Parliament by Late Acharaya J.B. Kripalani, a former President of the ruling Congress Party, as "born in sin". The Treaty was signed on April 29, 1954 and the Chinese forces crossed over into Bara Hoti early in June of the same year.

Having thus made her position secure in Tibet which was described by Mao Tse-Tung in 1939 as the palm of a hand of which Laddakh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh, were five fingers, Communist China began to prepare for controlling these fingers. To that end it built military and air bases in Tibet and developed communications for supplying the large forces deployed there with sinews of life and war. Tibet itself being mostly barren and unproductive, the supplies could come either from the Chinese mainland in the North and the East or from Sinkiang in the North-West of Tibet. Western Tibet bordering on Laddakh being far removed from Lhasa which itself is at a long distance from the Chinese mainland, a direct road link between Western Tibet and Sinkiang became a strategic necessity for China.

Having decided to build the road, the Chinese found that the shortest and easiest route lay through the Aksai Chin region of Laddakh, an integral part of India with which she had not long ago signed the Panch-Sheel Treaty. She began with cartographic aggression. The Chinese maps showed large parts of Laddakh including Aksai Chin and a narrow belt of territory along the Baltistan and Gilgit border with Sinkiang as Chinese Territory.

The internal situation in Jammu & Kashmir State and the attitude of the Government of India suited China's purpose admirably. During the Maharaja's rule an effective administrative control had been extended to the remotest parts of Laddakh, Baltistan and Gilgit. The Laddakh-Tibet border settled by tradition and usage of centuries had been confirmed by the Treaty of 1842 between Maharaja Gulab Singh and the Government of Dalai Lama. The State officials who were deputed for the frontier duty were required to go right up to the border at least once in their three year term. As a result there was no scope for confusion or uncertainty about the frontier.

But ever since power was transferred to the Kashmiri dominated National Conference, administration of Laddakh and other outlying parts of the State outside the Kashmir valley began to be neglected. The new officials who were appointed more for their political affiliations than

for administrative aptitudes, seldom moved out of Leh. The Government of India too did not bother itself to take adequate steps to guard or patrol the border. The intoxication of Bhai-Bhai-ism had gone so deep into its head that it could not even think of any aggression from China. Kushak Bakula, the Head Lama of Laddakh and then Minister for Laddakh Affairs in the Jammu & Kashmir Government, informed the State Assembly on March 1, 1963 that he, had warned the Governments of Kashmir and India about the Chinese plans of aggression after his visit to lake Mansarowar and Lhasa in 1954. Similar warnings had come from other quarters as well. But nothing perceptible was done either by the State Government or the Government of India to draw the People's attention to the Chinese threat or to checkmate it. Maybe the Communists within the Kashmir Cabinet were privy to the Chinese game. As a result the Chinese were able to follow up their cartographic aggression by actual aggression. They built the road linking Sinkiang with Gartok in Western Tibet right through Aksai Chin and also occupied a number of strategic outposts.

In the meantime, Pakistan too had started hobnobbing with Communist China. Apart from a direct link with Sinkiang provided to her by the occupied territory of Gilgit and Baltistan, she thought it worthwhile to offer the bait of Laddakh to China if the latter in return could help her to get Kashmir Valley or at least remain neutral in the dispute over it. Her desire for such an understanding with Communist China had been heightened since the open and public communist Russian support to India during the visit of Russian leaders to India in 1955. No wonder, therefore, that it was reported in a number of Indian and foreign newspapers in 1956 that Mr. S.H. Suhrawardy, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan, had during his visit to Peking suggested to his Chinese counterpart, that such a partition of Jammu and Kashmir State would give Kashmir Valley to Pakistan, Ladakh to China and Jammu to India.

Whatever may have actually transpired between Suhrawardy and Chou-en-Lai, the course of events as they have unfolded themselves since then have conclusively proved that China had become actively interested in the disintegration of the Jammu and Kashmir State so that she also might share the spoils with Pakistan.

The reports about Chinese intrusion into Indian territory began to pour in through unofficial sources after that. But until as late as July 1958, the Government of India in a 'Note verbale' to the Chinese counsellor in India had the temerity to say that "they would not like to believe that unilateral action has been taken by the Government of People's Republic of China with whom their relations are of the friendliest, to enforce alleged territorial claims in the region."

The Government of India woke up to the Chinese hostile intentions and aggressive occupation of Indian territory in Laddakh only when the Chinese arrested an Indian patrol party on normal routine duty in the northern part of Aksai Chin and detained and ill-treated it for five weeks in September 1958.

The protest notes sent by the Indian Foreign Secretary to the Chinese counterpart on October 18 and November 3 were countered by China with the assertion that Aksai Chin area belonged to China and that Indian soldiers had intruded into Chinese territory.

China followed up the occupation of Aksai Chin by aggressive patrollings and encroachments into the region of Western Pangong lake in Laddakh where she arrested six Indian policemen and also established a camp at Spanggur in spite of repeated Indian protests.

On October 20, 1959 a Chinese military force advanced forty miles into Indian territory in the Chang Chenpo valley of southern Laddakh and opened fire on an Indian patrol near the Kong-Ka-Pass in which nine Indian Police men were killed and ten others were taken prisoners

and subjected to very harsh and inhuman treatment.

This created an explosive situation. Press and public opinion in India reacted to this outrage by the Chinese very sharply. It forced the Indian Prime Minister, Pt. Nehru, who had been systematically trying to minimize the gravity of the situation by first concealing the fact of Chinese intrusions from the Indian public and Parliament and then belittling the importance of the territory occupied by China by describing it as barren and desolate "where not a blade of grass grows", to pay heed to the popular sentiment. He made a belated effort in his letter of November 18, 1959 to persuade his friend, Chou-en-Lai to ease the situation by withdrawing as an interim measure, the Chinese troops beyond the traditional boundary alignment shown on Indian maps while he on his part undertook to withdraw Indian troops to the line which China claimed as her boundary. This offer amounted to a clear surrender to the aggressor in so far as her claim that Laddakh-Tibet boundary was undefined was accepted and a 'no man's land' was sought to be created on the Indian soil itself.

But even this offer was rejected by Chou-en-Lai who in his reply of December 16, 1959 to Pt. Nehru, bluntly asserted: "This area has long been under Chinese jurisdiction and is of great importance to China. Since the Ching dynasty, this area has been the traffic artery linking up the vast regions of Sinkiang and Western Tibet. As far back as the latter half of 1950, it was along the traditional route in this area that units of the Chinese People's Liberation Army entered the Ari area of Tibet from Sinkiang to guard the frontiers. In the nine years since then, they have been making regular and busy use of this route to bring supplies. For up to eight or nine years since the peaceful liberation of Sinkiang and Tibet when the units of the Chinese People's Liberation Army began to be stationed in and patrol this area until September 1958 when intrusion of the area by the armed Indian personnel occurred, so many activities were carried out by the Chinese side in this area under its jurisdiction and yet the Indian side was utterly unaware of them."

Mr. Chou-en-Lai's visit to New Delhi and his direct talks with Pt. Nehru in April, 1960, failed to improve matters. Both Premiers, however, agreed to appoint teams of officials to jointly examine all relevant documents in support of the stands of the two Governments and submit a report within six months. The Government of India published the report of the officials of the two sides in February 1960. The report made it clear on the basis of vast and indisputable evidence that the traditional boundary between India and Tibet was that shown by India and that China had made unwarranted claim to about 50,000 sq. miles of Indian territory and was in unlawful occupation of about 12,000 sq. miles of this territory in Laddakh.

The Government of China for long did not even acknowledge the existence of the report. Finally in May 1962, they published a garbled and truncated version of the Chinese section of this report. Simultaneously, Chinese intrusions into various sectors of the Indian frontier were stepped up. New check-posts and roads to link them with rear bases were constructed and the Chinese troops began advance patrolling from the posts.

As time passed, the Chinese action and the tone of their replies to Indian protest notes, which were sent in abundance, became more and more curt and threatening. On April 30, 1962, the Government of China announced that they had ordered patrolling in the whole sector from the Karakoram Pass to the Kong-Ka-Pass and demanded that India withdraw two of her posts which were situated well within the Indian territory and threatened that if the Government of India failed to comply with the demands, the Government of China would resume patrolling along the entire boundary.

While Indo-Chinese relations were thus getting strained to a breaking point, Pakistan also stepped up its anti-Indian campaign. The main reason for this was the growing internal

discontent against the Martial Law regime in Pakistan particularly in its Eastern wing, and the consequent weakening of the position of General Ayub. He too, therefore, thought it convenient to divert his people's attention from internal difficulties by whipping up their frenzy about Kashmir by jingoistic talk and adoption of new pressure tactics. They included strengthening of the so-called Azad Kashmir Government, which began to claim an independent status and started hurling threats of armed invasion of Kashmir unshackled by the international commitments of Pakistan and launching of a virulent campaign against India and the USA in the Pakistan press. The USA was made a special target of attack for her continued economic aid to India which was getting aid from the USSR as well.

At the same time, possibilities of closer relations with communist China whose anti-India tirade was finding quite a sympathetic echo in Pakistan's press, began to be explored so that India could be harassed on both fronts. The possibility of such an eventuality had been hinted by the Chinese Ambassador. In India in his note of May 16, 1959 to the Foreign Secretary of India in which he had said that it would not be possible for India to fight on two fronts - China and Pakistan - and therefore she must make up with China. In the background of earlier Sino-Pak confabulations this veiled hint could not have gone unnoticed in Pakistan.

The process of Pakistan and China drawing nearer to each other that thus began culminated in the announcement of May 31, 1962, about the agreement between the two Governments to enter into negotiations to locate and align the border between Sinkiang on the one hand and Baltistan and Gilgit regions of Jammu & Kashmir State which had been illegally occupied by Pakistan, on the other. This was a clear indication that China and Pakistan were getting together to achieve their respective territorial ambition at the cost of India.

The Indian policy makers who, in spite of the pronounced hostility and naked aggression of Communist China, were still not prepared to concede that their policy toward China had failed, were flabbergasted by this volte face of China. As in the case of the McMahon Line, they had been banking on the verbal assurance of Chou-en-Lai to the Indian Ambassador in Peking in 1956 and to R.K. Nehru, the Secretary General of the Indian External Affairs Ministry in 1961 that China considered Kashmir to be a part of India. But they ignored the fact that Communist China unlike Communist Russia had never publicly supported India's stand regarding Kashmir. They were in fact living in a fool's paradise which was completely shattered by the Chinese Foreign Minister in his note to India dated May 31, 1962 which bluntly asked: "can you cite any document to show that we have ever said that Kashmir is a part of India"? It was a major victory for Pakistan. She had got the reward for hobnobbing with Communist China over the head of the USA which had been arming her on the understanding and in the hope that she would stand up against Communist Chinese and Russian expansion whenever required.

Pakistan's attitude toward India and China when the mass invasion of Communist China both in Laddakh and NEFA sectors of India's northern frontier began on September 8, 1962, could therefore be well anticipated. Pakistan's press systematically justified the Chinese stand and ridiculed India. Pakistan in fact was the only country of the non-Communist world which openly supported China and in that it went a step further than Albania, North Vietnam and North Korea. The attitude and conduct of the Muslims in Tezpur and elsewhere in the affected regions of India clearly pointed to a tacit understanding between China and Pakistan regarding the invasion and the attitude to be adopted by the Pro-Pakistan Muslims of India about it.

As the Chinese offensive mounted and India's unpreparedness became woefully exposed, the government of India was forced to request the USA, the UK and other friendly countries for help to meet the Communist advance. Realizing the magnitude of the threat and its dangerous implications for the entire free world, the USA and the UK responded magnificently. Pakistan too

should have come to the help of India both because the Chinese Communist expansion was as much a threat to her as to India and also because she had been given arms aid by the USA on the specific understanding that she would use it against Communist expansion and aggression whether it came from the USSR or from China. But Pakistan not only did not make any friendly gesture to India but what was worse, she vehemently protested to the USA and the UK for having extended military aid to India.

This attitude of Pakistan must have come as a shock and an eye-opener to the USA. It only confirmed the Indian view that Pakistan had obtained military aid from the USA only for use against India and not for assisting the free world in containing Communist expansion.

By behaving as she did, Pakistan lost an excellent opportunity of reversing the trend of Indo-Pak relations since 1947. Had Pakistan openly and unreservedly come to the aid of India in her time of need, there might have been created the necessary fund of goodwill and proper atmosphere for the settlement of all Indo-Pak disputes including the one regarding Kashmir in a friendly spirit of give and take. But in view of later developments, there are reasons to believe that Pakistan stood committed to China not to go to India's help and that some secret deal about the distribution of Assam territory had been arrived at between the two before China started the invasion. That explains the refusal of Muslims in Assam to evacuate Tezpur when evacuation of its civil population was ordered by the authorities.

It also explains the assertion that there was an agreement between China and Pakistan that the territory to the north of the Brahmaputra would be annexed by China and that lying to its south would be annexed by Pakistan. The fact that most of the Communist workers who were active in Assam also happened to be ex-Muslim Leaguers well known for their pro-Pakistan activities, lent further support to this assumption.

The position of the USA in this situation was really difficult. She had armed Pakistan to the teeth at a huge cost. Now she was rushing pressing military supplies to India. Her aim in both cases was to checkmate Communist expansion. How could her public opinion reconcile to the fact that the aid she had already given to Pakistan was not being used for the purpose for which it had been given and that there was possibility of the arms supplied by the USA to Pakistan and India being used against each other instead of being used against Communist China. It therefore became an obsession with the American government to bring India and Pakistan together somehow so that India may at least be able to shift a part of its forces deployed for defense against Pakistan for fighting against China. The British Government also shared this viewpoint which began to influence the Indian opinion as well.

Therefore, while the Chinese were fast advancing into Arunachal and Laddakh, the American and British political and military missions led by Mr. Averell Harriman, US Assistant Secretary of State, and Mr. Duncan Sandys, British Commonwealth Secretary, who had specially come to India to assess the situation and the aid needed by India immediately prevailed upon Pt. Nehru and President Ayub to affix their signatures to a joint communication which was issued simultaneously in New Delhi and Rawalpindi on November 30, 1962. The Communication said:

"The President of Pakistan and the Prime Minister of India have agreed that a renewed effort should be made to resolve the outstanding differences between their two countries on Kashmir and other related matters so as to enable India and Pakistan to live side by side in peace and friendship.

In consequence they have decided to start discussions at an early date with the object of reaching an honorable and equitable settlement.

These will be conducted initially at the ministerial level. At the appropriate stage direct talks will be held between Mr. Nehru and President Ayub."

This agreement to have direct talks between Pakistan and India on ministerial level to discuss Indo-Pak disputes particularly the one regarding Kashmir, placed India in an awkward situation. In effect it amounted to India agreeing to let Pakistan retain her fruits of aggression and have something more in the bargain. The circumstances leading to the agreement and the time chosen for talks made their success doubtful even before they began. They could lead to the desired result only if there was equal realization on both sides of the gravity of the situation and indivisibility of Indo-Pak defence against a threat like the one posed by Communist China. But there was no evidence that there was any such realization in Pakistan. Leading newspapers of Pakistan continued their tirade and denunciation of the USA for coming to the rescue of India. They acclaimed China as a friend and openly declared that there was no question of Pakistan going to the help of India against China even after getting Kashmir which they insisted must be handed over to Pakistan immediately.

On the other hand Pt. Nehru, even though he had signed the joint communique under the stress of circumstances, had his own reservations and doubts which were betrayed in the several statements he made before and after the signing of the communique. Apart from his personal attachment to Kashmir, the fear of national reaction to any further surrender to Pakistan and the pressure of his Communist and pro-Communist friends inside and outside the Government, who were interested in sabotaging the Western aid and maintaining the pro-Russian bias of India's foreign policy in the name of non-alignment, kept him wavering about the advisability of holding any talks and the limit to which India could go once such talks got going.

The prospects of the success of the talks were further dimmed by the unilateral cease-fire ordered by the Chinese Government on November 21, 1962. The motives of the Chinese in ordering a cease-fire in their hour of victory will remain a matter of conjecture. But surely one of them was to sabotage the possibility of closer collaboration between India and the West. They also wanted to save the Communist Party, their political vanguard in India, and also its friends and patrons inside the Indian Government from isolation and annihilation.

While China was keen to prevent an understanding between India and Pakistan for her own reasons, the ruling circles of Pakistan were keen to take advantage of the situation and put maximum pressure on India and the USA to secure their pound of flesh in the form of Kashmir. Announcement was made of the decision of Pakistan to sign a border pact with China just on the eve of the first round of talks which opened at Rawalpindi on January 30, 1963, and the signing of the Indo-Pak pact at Peking by Z.A. Bhutto, the Pakistan Foreign Minister and Chief Delegate at the Indo-Pak Talks, and Marshal Chen Yi, the Foreign Minister of China. On March 3, 1963 just a week before the opening of the fourth round of the talks at Calcutta was a calculated move to that end. These pressure tactics coupled with her fantastic demand for the whole of the State except just three thousand sq. miles of South Eastern tip of Jammu region made the eventual failure of these talks.

This failure of the direct talks in spite of intense behind the scene activity by the British and the American diplomats at New Delhi and Rawalpindi added to the already existing bitterness between the two countries. But they helped in clearing the air and removing some of the prevailing misconceptions about the attitudes and bona-fides of two countries regarding the basic question of Indo-Pak relations in general and Kashmir issue in particular. For instance, it now became quite evident that Pakistan was interested more in extorting fresh commitments and scoring diplomatic points over India for future use against her than in finding an honorable and equitable settlement of the dispute as such.

Rather, her glee at the Chinese aggress;on against India and her growing fraternization with Communist China and the timing of the Sino-Pak border pact, for which her Foreign Minister specially went to Peking, pointed to the inescapable conclusion that she was more interested in a rapprochement with Communist China than with democratic India.

The refusal of Pakistan to make any commitment about joint action with India to fight out the Chinese menace and her persistent rejection of the Indian offer of a "no war Pact", which was repeated during the talks as well, made it further clear that there was little hope of actual disengagement of their forces in the State even if India surrendered the Kashmir valley to her. This attitude of Pakistan provided the basis for the fear expressed by a number of responsible Indian leaders about the existence of certain secret Articles in the Sino-Pak pact providing for collaboration between Pakistan and Communist China to achieve their respective territorial and political objectives at the cost of India.

The developments narrated above confirmed the view that Pakistan so long as it exists would continue to be hostile to India. Her very existence depends on keeping the anti-Hindu and anti Indian frenzy among her Muslim population at a very high pitch. She will pick up some other apple of discord to keep this frenzy on, even if Kashmir issue is settled to her satisfaction. It is this need to keep up the tension which impels Pakistan to follow a foreign policy opposite to that of India. When India was drifting toward the Communist block, Pakistan joined the Western bloc to secure its diplomatic, moral and material support against India. When Communist China's unprovoked aggression forced India, to make a re-appraisal of her foreign poliey and draw closer to the Western countires which came to her help in the hour of her need, Pakistan began moving toward Communist China.

The one man who felt most disconcerted by these developments was Pt. Nehru, the sole arehitect of Indian policy in regard to Jammu and Kashmir. Chinese invasion had come as a rude shock to him. He had built his foreign policy particularly in regard to China and Tibet on the assumption that no socialist country could commit aggression and that there could be no danger to India from China. His dream was shattered. As he himself admitted, he had been living in an artificial world of his own imagination. China's attack and humiliating defeat of India literally broke him.

During his last troubled months, two things weighed heavily on his heart. He wanted to clear the decks for succession of his daughter Indira Gandhi, to his "Gaddi." He also wanted to make peace with Sh. Abdullah and find a peaceful solution of Kashmir problem aceptable to him.

He achieved the first objective through the so called Kamraj plan. Senior leaders like Morarji Desai who could legitimately stake their claim for leadership of the Congress Parliamentary Party, after this death, were removed from the cabinet under this plan.

It also helped him to get rid of Bakshi Gulam Mohammed who had been instrumental in the ouster of Sh. Abdullah in 1953, and had been in power in Kashmir ever since. His removal was necessary to withdraw the conspiracy case against Sh. Abdullah which had been going on since 1958. The case was withdrawn and Sh. Abdullah released in April 1964. It was followed up by Pt. Nehru with a new- initiative to solve the Kashmir problem through direct talks with President Ayub of Pakistan. But it failed to take off.

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The Storm Center of the World

Bal Raj Madhok

CHAPTER XIII

INDO - PAK WAR OF 1965

Prim Minister Nehru made the last effort of his life to settle the Kashmir issue in May, 1964. He invited Abdullah to come to Delhi as his personal guest. This esture made it clear that he wanted to placate Abdullah and made a new beginning in the spirit of forgive and forget.

Sh. Abdullah has given a graphic account of his meeting with Pt. Nehru after eleven years of estrangement in his autobiography. He claims to have suggested to Pt. Nehru to invite President Ayub of Pakistan to Delhi for direct talks on Kashmir and other related issues. According to him Pt. Nehru accepted his suggestion and requested him to visit Rawalpindi and invite Ayub on his behalf. According to Abdullah's version Pt. Nehru was "Prepared to consider all earlier proposals as also any alternative proposals that may be brought forward during talks to arrive at just, fair and mutually acceptable conclusions."

Sh. Abdullah received an invitation from President Ayub to visit Pakistan just at that time. It appeared to be pre-arranged and not just a coincidence. This cleared the way for his visit to Pakistan in the third week of May, 1964.

Before leaving for Rawalpindi Abdullah issued a press statement in which he gave his thinking about the possible solution of the problem. "The solution" he said, "should be such as does not create the feeling of defeat in any party, strengthening the foundations of secularism in India and satisfies the urge for freedom of the people of Kashmir". It pointed to a compromise solution suiting his ambition about freedom for Kashmir through some kind of mutual a rangement between New Delhi and Rawalpindi.

Abdullah and his entourage, which included his son Farooq Abdullah, got red carpet reception at Rawalpindi. He had detailed talks with President Ayub and other leaders of Pakistan. He must have conveyed to them his own plan and thinking of Pt. Nehru. Ayub accepted the invitation of Pt. Nehru and June 15, 1964 was fixed as a tentative date of his visit to New Delhi.

From Rawalpindi, Abdullah went to Muzaffarabad, the capital of the so-called "Azad Kashmir". This Pak occupied district was of vital importance for Kashmir Valley because the roads which linked it with rail-heads of Rawalpindi and Havelian passed through it. He was therefore keen to woo its non-Kashmiri people to unite it with independent Kashmir of his dreams.

While Abdullah was still in Muzaffarabad, Pt. Nehru breathed his last at New Delhi on May 27, 1964. This marked an end of an era in free-India. It also aborted the plan of direct talks between him and President of Pakistan for the settlement of Kashmir problem.

Pt. Nehru's death at that juncture was a great blow to Abdullah. He was confident of manipulating Nehru to hammer out a solution suiting his ambition and the plans of Pakistan. He cut short his visit and rushed back to Delhi.

As discussed earlier, special relationship between Nehru and Abdullah was a major factor in the making of the Kashmir problem. There was much in common between them. Both originally belonged to the Kaul Tribe of Kashmiri Pandits, both were voluptuous and ambitious and both shared weakness for women and good things of life. Pt. Nehru banked on Abdullah to retain Kashmir valley in truncated India. Apart from his attachment to Kashmir for personal reasons, he wanted to disprove the two nations theory on the basis of which he had accepted partition of British India in 1947. Sh. Abdullah wanted to exploit Pt. Nehru to put through his three nation theory according to which Kashmir was to be the third nation in the Indian sub-continent besides India and Pakistan. He might have succeeded in his game but for the twist of history mentioned above. Just as transfer of Hyderabad from Nehru's jurisdiction to Sardar Patel shattered the plan of Nizam Osman Ali about "Sovereign Hyderabad", death of Pt. Nehru destroyed the hope of Abdullah about securing an independent Kashmir with the concurrence of India and Pakistan.

Sh. Abdullah had paid handsome tribute to Pt. Nehru in "Atish-i-Chinar." But he has also betrayed his distrust for him in a very subtle way. According to him "Pt. Nehru's love for Kashmir was more like love for a beautiful woman whom he wanted to possess and that he had come to regard him (Abdullah) as a Rakib or rival in love-for the possession of the beautiful valley."

Soon after Nehru's death Sh. Abdullah went abroad ostensibly for pilgrimage to holy places of Islam. He awaited this opportunity to establish contacts with heads of many Islamic states and also had a long meeting with Premier Chou-en-Lai of China at Algiers, capital of Algeria. The reports of his parleys as published in the foreign and Indian press and intelligence reports received by Government of India from its own sources created grave doubts about him. He was reported to be thinking of an Algeria like liberation movement to secure freedom for Kashmir. He was therefore ordered to return to India. On arrival at New Delhi he was arrested and put under detention. This pointed to more realistic thinking on the part of the new Government led by Lal Bahadur Shastri.

Lal Bahadur Shastri had little in common with Pt. Nehru. He was short in size, rustic in looks and unassuming to a fault. He had a mind of his own. Like Sardar Patel he was a man of the masses who had risen from ranks by dint of hard work. He was a nationalist and realist. He had gained first hand experience of the tricky mind of Kashmiri Muslims during the planned disappearance and reappearance of the reputed hair of prophet Mohammed kept in Hazrat Bal Shrine at Srinagar, in winter of 1963 and the anti-India frenzy that it had created. He had no misconception about Abdullah. By his decision to arrest and detain him he made it clear to all concerned that he was not prepared to treat Kashmir as anybody's fief. This step sent right signal to Pakistan also. It made President Ayub realize that he could not expect a soft line on Kashmir from the new government of India. President Ayub had his own assessment of the new leadership at New Delhi and State of military preparedness of India. According to his assessment Indian military machine had been badly mauled by the Chinese and it would take India sometime to regain its strength and self-confidence. Like many other Muslim leaders, he too had been nursing the fond notion about superiority of Muslim soldiers. He had an exaggerated estimate of the strength of Pak army and capability of Patton tanks that he had acquired from USA. He therefore, wanted to take advantage of what he considered to be Pak military superiority for achieving his objective of grabbing Kashmir by other means.

Pakistan's rulers also banked on cooling off of the relations between India and Soviet Union in the wake of Indo-China war, Anglo-US support to India and improvement in relations between

Pakistan and USSR. He had visited Moscow and developed personal relation with Soviet leaders. At the same time he had continued to enjoy the confidence of USA and was getting massive military aid from her to modernize the Pak army.

But before taking resort to arms he wanted to probe two things. He wanted to know the American reaction if he used American supplied armament against India. India had been assured by USA that arms supplied to Pakistan will not to be used against her. Secondly, he wanted to have a neasure of the mettle of the new Indian leadership. This was the main motivation of Pak incursion into Kutch region of Gujarat in early 1965.

Rann of Kutch was part of the princely state of Kutch which acceded to India in 1947. It is a marshy and sparsely populated region. Some island like uplands called 'Bets' serve as pasture lands. There were unconfirmed reports about reserves of oil and gas in this region. But no exploration had been done until then. India didn't expect any trouble from Pakistan in this sector. Therefore, it was virtually undefended. There were only a few police posts on some of the "Bets".

Pakistan had no valid claim on this area. Maps of the state of Kutch and India as a whole prepared by the government of undivided India had clearly denoted it as a part of Kutch State.

Armed forces of Pakistan backed by Patton tanks made a surprise attack on Kutch, captured some of the Indian posts and laid claims on the whole of Rann of Kutch. Before India could take a defensive action and make a counter attack, UK and USA began to put pressure on India to accept ceasefire which left a big chunk of Indian territory in Pak occupation. Soon after Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri and General Ayub met in London where they had gone for Commonwealth Prime Minister's Conference. There an agreement was signed through the mediation of British Prime Minister. The issue was referred to an International tribunal one of whose members was to be nominated by India and the other by Pakistan.

This was a clear victory for Pakistan. She had succeeded in creating a dispute by unprovoked aggression, tested its newly acquired arms, known the American reaction and internationalized the dispute with the assurance that Pakistan would get something in the bargain. It did get a chunk of about 1000 sq. miles of indisputable Indian territory in Kutch through the award of the Tribunal.

The Kutch adventure and its outcome gave new hope and confidence to Pakistan. It was evident from Ayub's address to Pakistani students in London in the course of which he bragged that Pakistan's tanks could have a stroll upto Delhi if he had so wished. The way Lal Bahadur Shastri, new as he was to the ways of international politics and diplomacy, acted during this Pak aggression and the negotiations that followed made Ayub think that he could brow beat him and India with impunity. He therefore, decided to go ahead with the main plank of his program to capture Kashmir.

Pakistan's plan was to launch a sudden attack on Kashmir Valley after sending thousands of armed infiltrations into the state to prepare the ground for proper reception and quick success of the invading army. The infiltration began in May, 1965. The plan was to take the city of Srinagar by surprise on August 9, 1965 when hundreds of thousands of villagers were to come there to celebrate the Martyrs Day call which had been given by pro- Pak leadership of Kashmir Valley. At the same time Pak saboteurs were to become active all along Pathankot- Jammu-Srinagar highway. A major attack was to be made on Chhamb sector to get control of the bridge on the Chenab, at Akhnoor and cut off the north western part of the state from supply bases at Jammu and Pathankot. The bridge on the Chenab at Ram Ban on the highway to Srinagar from Jammu

was also to be captured.

The operation in Jammu region began according to plan. But timely information by a Muslim Gujar of Uri about massive infiltration and timely action by the authorities made the part of the operation in the valley a flop.

As a defensive action, the Indian defense forces made an assault on 9000 feet high Haji Peer Pass the only pass leading into the valley from the North West which was under control of Pakistan, and occupied it. An equally daring action led to the re-capture of Kargil Heights which command Srinagar-Leh road. These Heights had been captured by Indian forces in April at the time of Kutch war but had been returned to Pakistan in June. These two actions sealed off Kashmir valley and ensured the safety of Laddakh.

Finding its plan of capturing Kashmir through armed infiltrators with the help of local people thus thwarted, Pakistan launched a full scale invasion of the state in Chhamb Jammu sector on September 1, 1965. The object as stated above was to capture Akhnoor bridge and cut off Rajouri and Poonch from the rest of the state and clear the way for capturing the Ram Ban bridge on the Chenab to enable Pakistan to isolate troops in the encircled valley.

Indian troops in Chhamb had no tanks to support them because the one span Akhnoor bridge could not take the load of heavy tanks. Therefore, the capture of the bridge and advance of the Pak forces on Jammu appeared to be a certainty. Indian air force went into action when Pakistani tanks were hardly 10 miles away from Akhnoor. It destroyed a number of them and slowed down their advance.

Even though Pak advance toward Akhnoor and Jammu was slowed down by air action, it was obvious that it could not be halted unless there was counter attack on Lahore and Sialkot sectors by India. Pakistan had planned its strategy on the assumption that as in 1947 India would not extend the theatre of war beyond the boundary of Jammu and Kashmir state and that with the logistic advantage that Pakistan had in Chhamb sector, it would be able to capture Kashmir and that India would acquiesce in the loss of the valley after fretting and fuming for some time. The experience of first Indo-Pak war when Pt. Nehru did not allow Indian army to make a counter attack on Sialkot, which would have forced Pakistan to come to terms on India's conditions lay at the root of this assumption. Ayub had thought that Prime Minister Shastri would not have the courage to order an all out war with Pakistan. He was also confident that in case of such a war his armored divisions equipped with Patton tanks would be able to go right up to Delhi.

I happened to be at Srinagar when Pakistan launched its attack on Chhamb. I had earlier visited Indo-Pak border from Pathankot to Akhnoor and seen with my own eyes the deserted villages, burned vehicles and streams of refugees moving toward Jammu.

D. P. Dhar, then Home Minister of State met me on September 2, and apprised me of the imminent threat to Kashmir Valley. He requested me to rush to Delhi to press upon the Prime Minister Shastri to launch counter attack on Sialkot to relieve pressure on Jammu and Kashmir.

"You know every inch of Kashmir and can understand the situation better than any other Indian leader. Once Jammu-Srinagar Highway is cut, Kashmir cannot be saved" was his pathetic plea.

Fortunately, an Indian Airlines plane was stranded in Srinagar at that time because Jammu airport had been closed. It flew me and some officials and visiting members of Parliament direct to Delhi the same evening.

I was happy to learn on reaching Delhi that on the advice of the Defense Chief Shri Shastri had already taken the right decision. He had learned his lesson from the Kutch fiasco and was prepared to call the Pakistani bluff at all costs.

Counter attack on Lahore and Sialkot had the desired result. Pressure on Chhamb sector was relieved. Pak forces fell back to defend Lahore and Sialkot. When cease fire was ordered on September 21, in response to resolution of U. N. Security Council, Pakistan was nowhere near Kashmir Valley while Lahore and Sialkot were within the range of Indian guns. Lahore had been evacuated and could have fallen into Indian hands if the Indian government had so decided.

Thus the Pak plan to secure by force of arms what it had not been able to get by diplomacy and negotiations failed miserably. Not only Kashmir eluded it once again but it also got a bloody nose. Capture of Haji Pir, Kargil Heights and part of Pak territory up to Sialkot and Lahore retrieved the prestige of Indian armed forces which had suffered badly during the Sino-Indian war of 1962.

But India was once again worsted at the diplomatic table. Attitude of UK and USA during and after the war, as expected, was anything but friendly. Their sympathy for Pakistan was open. But to the great chagrin and dismay of India even USSR maintained a neutral stance. It gave no indication of sympathy and support for India.

After the war Soviet Premier, Kosygin, decided to play the role of a peace maker. He invited both Prime Minister Shastri and President Ayub to meet at Tashkent for peace settlement. Both accepted his invitation. Indian delegation including Foreign Minister Swaran Singh, Defense Minister Y. B. Chawan and Indian Ambassador at Moscow, T. N. Kaul. Pakistan delegation included its Foreign Minister, Z. A. Bhutto. The meeting began on January 4th, with an opening address by Kosygin in the course of which he said "India and Pakistan are our southern neighbors. We always came out not only for the strengthening of friendly relations between Soviet Union and India and Pakistan but also for the reign of peace and friendship between these countries themselves." He did not utter a word which could be considered as sympathetic to India which had been subjected to unprovoked aggression. Deliberations continued till January 10, when Tashkent Declaration was adopted and initiated by Lal Bahadur Shastri and Ayub Khan on behalf of India and Pakistan.

Tashkent Declaration was a collection of platitudes. Its only concrete and operative part was clause-II which said "The Prime Minister of India and President of Pakistan have agreed that all armed personnel of the two countries shall be withdrawn not later than 15 February, 1966 to the positions they held prior to August 5th and both sides will observe the ceasefire terms on the ceasefire line."

This was a clear rebuff to India. It not only put the aggressor and the aggressed on par but also committed India to withdraw from Haji Pir and Kargil Heights which belonged to India, had been illegally occupied by Pakistan and had been liberated by Indian armed forces at a heavy cost. It virtually gave legal validity to Pak occupation of the territory it had occupied in 1947-48 without prejudice to its claim on the rest of the state which was still with India.

Lal Bahadur had assured the people and armed forces before his departure for Tashkent that he would not accept any suggestion for the return to Pakistan of Haji Pir pass and Kargil Heights. He stood firm on his word to the nation till the last day. But his aides, Swaran Singh, Y. B. Chawan and T. N. Kaul, pressured him to accept the Pak demand for withdrawal of troops from there for fear of alienation of USSR. It implied that it was the pressure of the Soviet Union which forced India to accept a patently unjust settlement. Had India not put all her eggs in Soviet basket and had it maintained dialogue with USA also before and after going to Tashkent, it might have

been saved from the predicament in which Shastri had to sign the Tashkent Declaration against his better judgement.

Prime Minister Shastri was found dead in his room at Tashkent on the morning of January 11, 1966. It was given out that he died of heart failure. But suspicion that he was poisoned to death lingers on. No detailed inquiry into his death was made. Indian physician Dr. Chugh, who had accompanied him to Tashkent was mysteriously liquidated sometime later.

Death of Shri Shastri Shastri was the greater loss suffered by India at Tashkent. Had he returned to India alive, he might have given new orientation to India's foreign policy and ended her total dependence on Soviet Union which had proved not only undependable but also dubious.

Soviet leaders were more concerned with global interests and global strategy of Soviet Union than with national interests of India. Independence of character and commitment to national interest above everything else that Lal Bahadur Shastri had displayed during his short tenure was not to the liking of Soviet Union and its supporters in India. They wanted a more pliable person committed to Nehruvian foreign policy to toeing the Soviet line even at the cost of vital national interest of India. That explained the interest Kosygin, who overstayed in Delhi for 4 days after the funeral of Lal Bahadur Shastri, showed in the election of Mrs. Gandhi as Leader of Congress Parliamentary Party to fill the place of Lal Bahadur Shastri.

Pakistan was not sincere about Tashkent Declaration. This became clear from the statement made by Altaf Gauhar, Press Secretary of President Ayub, soon after the signing of this Declaration. He was reported to have said that nothing but withdrawal of troops to August 5, position which suited Pakistan had been agreed upon and that Pakistan reserved the right to continue its efforts to secure Kashmir by force. President Ayub confirmed this in his statement made at Hamburg in November, 1966. He said, "It (Tashkent Declaration) settled nothing. All it did was to enable the two countries to disengage their armies from each other."

From the Indian point of view, the futile Pak attempt to grab Kashmir by force had some positive results. In the first place even those parties in India like the Swatantra Party which had been advocating settlement with Pakistan about Kashmir in terms of UN resolutions conceded that Pakistan had forfeited its claim on Kashmir by taking resort to arms.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the new Prime Minister, also declared at New York on March 31, 1966, "It is now too late to talk of plebiscite. The second invasion of Kashmir by Pakistan last autumn has destroyed whatever marginal or academic value the old UN resolutions might have had. Kashmir is now also vital to defense of Laddakh against China. Any plebiscite today would by definition amount to questioning the integrity of India. It will rouse the demand for accessation against which is fought a civil war. We cannot and will not tolerate a second partition of India on religious ground. It will destroy the very basis of the Indian states." 1.

Secondly, it had a salutary effect on the minds of those Kashmiris who had been wistfully looking to Pakistan.

Had the government of India taken advantage of this situation to fully integrate Kashmir with the rest of India and had it extended Indian Constitution to that State and enabled Indians from other parts of the country to settle there, the Pak design on Kashmir might have been effectively scotched for ever.

But that was not to be. Mrs. Gandhi had the same weakness for Sh. Abdullah and his concept of Kashmiri nationalism which had prevented her father to adopt a realistic and nationalistic

approach to Kashmir issue. Her policies soon destroyed the wholesome effect of 1965 war on Kashmiri mind.

The net result of Second Indo-Pak war on Kashmir went in favor of Pakistan, as in the case of First War of 1947- 48. Pakistan had gained 30,000 sq. miles of Indian territory by the war of 1947-48. It regained some of this territory which had been taken back by Indian army in the war of 1965. It also established its right on the territory illegally occupied by it since the ceasefire of 1949. It was also able to push out lakhs of Hindus from both wings of Pakistan as refugees into India. Furthermore, it confiscated Indian properties and assets in Pakistan worth hundred of crores of rupees. Thus, in spite of its failure to grab Kashmir by force it was able to strengthen its position against India both internally and externally.

FOOTNOTE

1. Hindustan Times, New Delhi, April 2, 1966.

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The Storm Center of the World

Bal Raj Madhok

CHAPTER XIV

INDO - PAK WAR OF 1971

Ambivalence of Soviet Union at Tashkent which forced India to withdraw from Haji Pir and Kargil Heights and accept the status quo ante in Jammu and Kashmir state was the outcome of a number of developments in international field after Sino-Indian war of 1962 which had impelled its leadership to re-assess and re-order its global strategy. The most important of these developments was the rift between Soviet Union and Communist China because of conflict of national interests and personality clash between the leadership of the two communist giants.

Communist China had been growing under the shadow of Soviet Union since 1949. But as it found its feet and established its position in political and economical fields both internally and externally, it began to assert itself against hegemonic approach of Soviet Union. The border between them in Central Asia which passed through territories acquired by both of them during their imperialist expansion was undemarcated. China now began to claim certain territories which Soviet Union controlled. It also began to question earlier Sino-Russian treaties as unequal treaties and asserted its independent position in the international forums. This was not to the liking of Soviet Union, which had come to consider itself as the big brother. The age old European hunch about "Yellow peril" coming from China also began to haunt Soviet leaders.

Tie up between China and Pakistan was another discordant factor. Muslim dominated Central Asian Soviet Republic had been feeling the pull of Pakistan on their population. Pakistan getting closer to China, therefore, did not suit the Soviet Union. It wanted to draw Pakistan away from China. That was the basic reason of the Soviet stance of neutrality between India and Pakistan at Tashkent.

Pakistan too began to re-assess the situation, particularly after the Russian built tunnel through the Hindukush mountain in 1964. Russian tanks could now roll down to Kabul in a few hours and Peshawar was only 200 miles away from there. I happened to be in Kabul on the day Tashkent-Kabul highway passing through this tunnel was officially opened. I had written an article on that day in which I had stated that no government of Pakistan can now afford to remain on the wrong side of Soviet Union. The winding up of the American Airbase near Peshawar from which spy flights into Soviet Union had been undertaken was the result. It paved the way for improvement of relations between Soviet Union and Pakistan. President Ayub was too practical a man not to take advantage of this changed situation. He candidly wrote in his autobiography, "if we could not establish normal relations with all our big neighbors, the best thing was to have an understanding with two of them (Soviet Union and China). They might have internal differences

but we need not get involved in that. This was a vital element in our thinking. It was on this basis that I have set out to normalize our relations with the peoples of Republic of China and Soviet Union."

Another factor which induced re-thinking in Soviet Union about Kashmir was failure of Indian leadership to heed the advice given by the Soviet leaders from time to time about changing the complexion of population of Kashmir valley and integrating it with the rest of India. This created a feeling in them that perhaps India itself was not serious about holding on to Kashmir.

The shift in the stand of Soviet leadership which first became evident when Tashkent began to be reflected in the utterances of Indian communist leaders inside and outside the Parliament. I got confirmation of the shift and the reasons for it from a Soviet diplomat stationed at New Delhi. He explained "Soviet Union had been at the beck and call of India in regard to Kashmir for 10 years. What have you done to solve the Kashmir problem during this period? You have neither fully integrated it by extending the constitution of India to it nor you have done anything to change complexion of its population. How long you expect Soviet Union to take India's chest nuts out of the fire?"

Almost the same explanations were given to Dr. Sanjiva Reddy, the Speaker of the Indian Lok Sabha, when he led an Indian Parliamentary Delegation to Moscow in 1968 by more authoritative quarters. He told this to a joint meeting of the two Houses of Parliament after he returned to New Delhi.

The lack of clear and firm policy in regard to Kashmir on the part of government of India had an adverse effect on the mind and conduct of a large section of Kashmiri Muslims. They became more amenable to Pak propaganda and began to adopt an openly hostile attitude toward India and its security forces in Kashmir. I noted this when I visited Kashmir in 1968 as Vice-Chairman of Indian study Team on Defense. I heard the slogans "Indian dogs go back" being hurled on Indian soldiers by a Kashmiri mob. I also learned from some sector commanders stationed in Kashmir that their real worry was growing hostility of Kashmiri Muslims who they feared might stab India in the back in the event of another Pak aggression.

In the meantime, Sino-Soviet rift began to take the form of an open confrontation. China's pull on communist parties of Asian countries also began to grow. This upset Soviet leadership. It began to devise a new strategy for containing Chinese influence and maintaining dominant position of Soviet Union in Asia. To that end it put forth a "Collective Security Plan" and invited India to join it. Non-communist opposition parties of India saw in this plan a move to further strengthen Soviet strangle hold on India. Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi also did not favor it because she felt it might weaken India's position in Non-Aligned Movement.

Overthrow of General Ayub by General Yahya Khan and growing demand in East Pakistan for separation from Pakistan created a new situation. Pakistan let loose a reign of terror in East Pakistan resulting in influx of millions of Hindu refugees into India. This created new tensions between India and Pakistan besides putting a huge economic burden on India. People of India in general were sympathetic to the aspirations of the people of East Pakistan and favored extension of active support to the liberation movement there which was being led by Sheikh Mujibur-Rehman.

China and USA which had come closer to each other were expected to back Pakistan in case of a show down on the issue of East Pakistan. India therefore felt the need of ensuring soviet support in such an eventuality. Thus the interest of both India and Soviet Union began to point to the need of a more definite understanding between the two. The Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty

signed in mid 1971 was the result.

Things began to move quickly after signing of this treaty, Sheikh Mujibur Rehman's Awami Party secured a clear majority in the general elections of Pakistan held in 1971. But he was deprived of Prime Ministership of Pakistan because of the opposition of the leaders of West Pakistan led by Z. A. Bhutto. East Pakistan thereafter, declared its independence from Pakistan. This resulted in a bloody confrontation between Pak army and people of East Pakistan who were supported by the Bengali speaking section of armed forces of Pakistan and local bureaucracy. India at that time decided to extend its support to the freedom fighters of the East Pakistan, now called Bangladesh, on humanitarian grounds.

As a soldier, General Yahya Khan realized quite early that Pakistan could not hold East Pakistan by force for long. He had mentally reconciled himself to separation of East Pakistan from Pakistan. He wanted to compensate this loss by securing Kashmir for West Pakistan. He had therefore withdrawn most of the Pak air force from East Pakistan and wanted to withdraw the bulk of Pakistan army also from there. But he could not do so because of naval blockade by India.

Full scale Indo-Pak war began preemptive attack by Pakistan on Indian air bases on December 3, 1971. The main objective of Pakistan was to secure Kashmir and some other territory in the West, in lieu of East Pakistan. This became clearer from the evidence he gave before the War Commission appointed by the Government of Pakistan after his fall from power. He was reported to have told the commission, which was presided over by the Chief Justice of Pakistan, that he wanted to withdraw bulk of Pak troops from East Pakistan before the start of the war. He did withdraw all but one squadron of Pak air force from there but he could not withdraw the army because of the Indian blockade. He later tried to get the Pak army out of Bangladesh on December 9, with the consent of Government of India. India, according to him, had promised safe passage of Pakistan army from Bangladesh ports to Karachi. But Bhutto dissuaded him from executing this plan by assuring him that China and USA were going to intervene militarily in favor of Pakistan.

The casualty figures released by the government of India after the war made it clear that Pakistan was interested primarily in the war on the West and its objective was to get Kashmir somehow. While only 1,300 Indian Jawans and officers died in the operation in Bangladesh, Indian casualties on the western front exceeded 4,000. Indian armed forces not only foiled determined and persistent Pak attempts to push into Jammu and Kashmir state and capture the valley, but also inflicted a crushing defeat on Pakistan in Sindh and Lahore sectors. Pak navy and Karachi port were put out of action. Lahore was besieged and 5,000 sq. miles of Pak territory in Lahore sector was occupied. Pakistan army could capture only 60 sq. miles of Indian territory in the Chhamb sector in Jammu region of Jammu and Kashmir state. In the Eastern sector more than 90,000 Pak troops surrendered and were made prisoners of war.

This decisive Indian victory in the war of 1971 resulted in liberation of Bangladesh, dismemberment of Pakistan, surrender of over 90,000 Pak troops and occupation of valuable Pak territory in Punjab bigger in size than Kashmir valley. Indian defense forces established their superiority on land and sea as also in the air. This made India the dominant power in South Asia. It was then a position to clinch the Kashmir issue once for all.

But political leadership failed India once again. It could not take advantage of the magnificent military victory even to settle the Kashmir issue. Shimla agreement signed in July, 1972, converted India's military victory into a political and diplomatic defeat once again. The country, the nation and its gallant armed forces were betrayed.

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The Storm Center of the World

Bal Raj Madhok

CHAPTER XV

THE GREAT BETRAYAL

War has been described as diplomacy carried out by other means because the final outcome of all wars is, in the ultimate analysis determined by diplomatic talks for a peace settlement. As such even stunning victories in the battlefield if not followed by effective diplomacy by political leadership yield little result.

It has been the tragedy of India since freedom that its political leadership has proved singularly inept and unrealistic in the diplomatic and political follow up of the war, that were forced on it by Pakistan in 1947, 1965 and 1971. This failure of its political leadership in dealing with Pakistan can be attributed to three main reasons. The first is its failure to go to the root of Muslim separation and accept the logical corollaries of partition in 1947. As a result its policy toward Pakistan has been a continuation of its appeasement policy toward the founding father of Pakistan in United India. Its perception of the motivations of Pakistan and the real cause of its hostility toward India has, therefore, been faulty from the very beginning.

The second reason is its failure to define in clear terms Indian nationhood, national objectives and war aims if a war is forced on it.

The third reason is its failure to co-relate Indian foreign policy with defense needs of free India. Talk about principled foreign policy is meaningless and misleading. Primary concern of foreign policy of any country has to be safeguarding of national interests particularly security interests. Objective understanding and assessment of the character and motivation of the countries and elements from which threat to national security can come is an essential pre-requisite for a sound defense and foreign policy.

The war of 1971 was fought on two fronts. Pakistan had not much interest in the war in the Eastern sector because its leadership had mentally reconciled itself to the loss of East Pakistan. Its main interests lay in the war on the western front. There its objective was to gain Kashmir.

India had vital stake in the war on both these fronts. War in the East was basically a war of liberation of the people of Bangla Desh who wanted to get rid of the colonial rule of West Pakistan. Apart from humanitarian considerations, India was interested in peace and security of Bangla Desh because of the large Hindu-Buddhist minority there and interdependence of economics of Bangla Desh and West Bengal. India's national interests demanded a stable Bangla Desh committed to equal treatment to all its citizens which is the basic postulate of secularism and speedy return and resettlement of about 10 million Hindu refugees. But interests of Hindu refugees demanded that they should be resettled in a compact area along the India Bangla Desh

border with some kind of constitutional guarantee about their basic rights. Buddhist people of Chittagong Hill Tract, which had been wrongly given to Pakistan in 1947 wanted at least an autonomous state for their home land within Bangla Desh. The recurring influx of Chakma Buddhist refugees from the Chittagong Hill Tract into Tripura and West Bengal made it necessary that their position was clearly defined and their rights safeguarded in any settlement with Bangla Desh.

Peace settlement made by Indian leadership with Mujibur Rehman, the President of Bangla Desh, failed to safe guard any of these interests. Bangla Desh has declared itself an Islamic state and has been drawing closer to Islamic Pakistan. The plight of its Hindu - Buddhist minority has become even worse. There is need of an indepth study of condition of Hindu Buddhist minority in Bangla Desh. The biggest genocide of the century in the name of Islam has been going on there all these years.

The war in the west was forced on India by the rulers of Pakistan with the specific objective of grabbing Kashmir. Therefore, peace settlement with the remaining Pakistan in the background of decisive victory won by Indian armed forces on the battle field, was the real test of Indian leadership.

In the light of the dismal performance of Indian leadership in the situation that followed the cease-fire in the war of 1947 - 48 and war of 1965, many Indians were genuinely worried about another diplomatic fiasco after the war. Some of them had formed a group under the names "India first club". I had been associated with it from its inception. While the war was on, this group prepared a note about India's "War aims and objectives." It was published in the form of a monograph for the consideration of the political leadership and policy makers.

In my introduction to that monograph, I had written:

"At a time when our jawans and officers of all the three services are locked in a life and death struggle against another Pakistani aggression, a clear enunciation and declaration of India's war aims and objectives, has become a real necessity. It is important that the blood of our brave soldiers, is not shed in vain and the gains made in the battlefield are not lost on the negotiation table for want of clarity about our long term objective. The mistakes of the past must be avoided to ensure a lasting peace in the Indian region of the world."

The note warned the government of India that there should be no repetition of Tashkent this time and made some concrete suggestions. The first suggestion was that India must "declare a peninsular doctrine and accept the principle of India's predominant interest in the Indian sub-continent while respecting at the same time the territorial rights and sovereignty of all states."

It further suggested that "any peace settlement with Pakistan must restore the legal right of India on the entire territory of Jammu and Kashmir state including the part under illegal occupation of Pakistan since the Cease-Fire of January, 1949."

But, it had no effect on Indian leadership. It learned nothing from past experience.

The settlement made with Pakistan at Shimla on July 3, 1972, was a real fiasco. It literally turned the vanquished into a victor. Instead of utilizing the convincing victory won by the Indian armed forces in the December war for setting the Kashmir issue at rest, Indira Gandhi converted the military victory into political defeat by re-opening the Kashmir issue and explicitly accepting Pakistan as a party to it. This virtually put back the Kashmir issue where it stood on January 1, 1949.

The crux of the Kashmir problem from its inception is that Pakistan has occupied by force about 30,000 square miles of the territories of erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir state which legally and constitutionally belonged to India by virtue of the Instrument of Accession executed by Maharaja Hari Singh in October, 19, 1947. The question was how to get back this territory from Pakistan.

There was no question of Pakistan having any claim or locus standi in that part of the state including Kashmir Valley which remained with India after the ceasefire of January 1, 1949.

The only realistic and logical stand of India at Shimla should have been an unequivocal demand for vacating of Pak aggression and return of 30,000 square miles of occupied territory to India in return for vacating of Pak territory occupied by the Indian armed forces in the war of 1971.

But Indira Gandhi and her advisers had given away the Indian case even before the Shimla Conference began. D. P. Dhar, when he visited Islamabad as special envoy of the Indian Prime Minister to prepare the ground for Shimla summit was reported to have conveyed to Bhutto that India would be willing to concede his demands about vacating of Pak territory and release of the prisoners-of-war if he was prepared to accept the line of control in Jammu and Kashmir as international frontier between India and Pakistan. Dhar returned with the impression that Bhutto was agreeable to this suggestion.

Bhutto, after having known the mind of India went on a West Asian tour to consult his Islamic friends. He pleaded with them that he could stand up to India only if they promised him massive monetary and military help. After having got firm commitment of help, he planned his strategy for Shimla. He came there determined not to accept the line of control as international boundary and relinquish his claim to Kashmir. The Shimla summit, therefore, virtually failed to arrive at any agreement.

But after the failure had been broadcast to the world, Bhutto had a midnight exclusive meeting with Indira Gandhi in which he was presumed to have given some verbal assurance to her. Thereafter the Shimla agreement was signed.

Article IV of the Agreement stipulated that "in Jammu and Kashmir the line of control resulting from the ceasefire of December 17, 1971, shall be respected by both sides without prejudice to the recognized position of either side. Neither side shall seek to alter it unilaterally irrespective of mutual differences and legal interpretations. Both sides further undertake to refrain from the threat or use of force in violation of this line." Article VI of the agreement further stipulated that "both governments agree that their respective heads will meet again and in the meantime the representatives of the two sides will meet to discuss the modalities and arrangements for the establishment of durable peace and normalization of relations including the question of repatriation of prisoners-of-war and civilian internees, a final settlement of Jammu and Kashmir and the resumption of diplomatic relations."

It is clear from these two Articles that the Shimla agreement not only re-opened the Kashmir question but also made Pakistan a party to any settlement of that question. This completely nullified the declared and often-repeated stand of India that Kashmir was not negotiable and that Pakistan had no locus standi in Kashmir.

Shimla agreement came as a rude shock to all nationalists and patriots and stunned the armed forces. It was almost a body blow to those who had won a brilliant victory in the battlefield at a very heavy cost. They rightly considered it a betrayal of the armed forces and the nation.

Steeped in British tradition, Indian armed forces had not dabbled in politics and political decision

making since freedom. But this betrayal impelled some top leaders of defense forces to think seriously about replacement of the political leadership. For some time India stood dangerously near to a military coup. It did not come about mainly because there was no political leader of stature and status enjoying confidence of the people and defense forces alike, at hand.

Defense Minister, Babu Jagiwan Ram, was the only senior leader of the ruling Congress Party, who felt really sore about the Shimla Agreement. He was particularly opposed to having Chhamb area of Jammu in the hands of Pakistan while India had agreed to vacate 5000 square miles of Pak territory of great strategic and economic importance which Indian troops had occupied during the war.

To add insult to injury Government of India and official media tried to sell this document of national shame as an achievement. Successive government at New Delhi have been harking upon the Agreement all these years. But, Pakistan which was the real gainer, had been using it only as an instrument to keep Kashmir issue alive.

Shimla agreement was, in a way, a personal victory of Z. A. Bhutto. He proved himself to be a master diplomat. It greatly strengthened his position in Pakistan.

India failed to get back Chhamb. When it had agreed to vacate much bigger Pak territory proved that Indian Government was prepared to compromise its legal claim not only on Pak occupied part of the state but also on the territory that was under its control. Shimla agreement was thus not just a repetition of Tashkent. It was much worse because Indian position in 1972 was much stronger than what it was in 1966.

In the absence of definite evidence, it is difficult to say whether Soviet Union played any role in the Shimla settlement. But the fact that many of these who had accompanied Lal Bahadur Shastri to Tashkent, and had pressured him to toe the Soviet line there, were also the advisors of Mrs. Gandhi at Shimla, lends support to the view that the Soviet Union did play some role, may be indirectly, in finalization of this Agreement at the last moment.

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The Storm Center of the World

Bal Raj Madhok

CHAPTER XVI

BACK TO SQUARE ONE

Shimla agreement almost brought the Kashmir question to where it stood in 1949. All the gains of the war had been lost. Realism, therefore, demanded that steps were taken to end the uncertainty in regards to the parts of the State under Indian control by fully integrating it with the rest of India. This demanded abrogation of the temporary Article 370 of the Constitution, scrapping of separate Constitution for the state and extension of the Indian Constitution and law of citizenship to it. Situation was favorable for taking these steps. Defeat and dismemberment of Pakistan had demoralized the protagonists of Pakistan in the valley. They were in a mood to accept the finality of the accession of the State to India and reconcile themselves to the political realities.

Sh. Abdullah, who was cooling his heels in detention at Delhi, had also learned the lesson of the war of 1971. He had realized that he could no longer bank on Pakistan for establishment of an independent Islamic Sheikhdom in Kashmir.

Had Mrs. Gandhi shown vision and realism she could have awaited the opportunity and taken steps to fully integrate the India held part of the state with the rest of India with an open mind and clear conscience.

But that was not to be. Mrs. Gandhi was conscious of the desire of her father, Pt. Nehru, to make peace with Sh. Abdullah more or less on the latter's terms and the efforts that he made in that direction just before his death.

Some of her Kashmir advisors, particularly Mir Kasim, the Congress Chief Minister of the state, were really Abdullah's men. They began to goad her to settle with Abdullah because of their behind the scenes effort. Abdullah, when he was still under detention, called on Mrs. Gandhi. As a result of what transpired between them, he was released and parleys for a new political settlement between Abdullah and government of India began. They were carried on by G. Parthasarathy on behalf of Mrs. Gandhi and Mirza Afzal Beg on behalf of Sh. Abdullah for about two years.

On getting reports about these parleys and terms of agreement under which Abdullah was to be inducted into office once again, I wrote to Mrs. Gandhi warning her about the dangers of his contemplated move. I gave her my frank assessment of Sh. Abdullah and reminded her that leopards do not change their spots. She replied that she was taking a "calculated risk."

Mrs. Gandhi announced in the Parliament on February 24, 1975, that a settlement had been made

with Sh. Abdullah under which he would be installed as Chief Minister of the state and relationship between Jammu and Kashmir and the Union Government would be guided by the six point conclusions of the protracted talks between Parthsarathi and Afzal Beg. Parliament was also informed that Sh. Abdullah wanted the 1953 position to be restored. Even though this request was not granted, many concessions were made, including the power to review some of the Central laws extended to the states after 1953.

Whatever the languages of the accord, the very fact that Sh. Abdullah was being put back in power even though he had not a single member in the state legislature sent wrong signals to the people of Kashmir. There was a general feeling that hands of the clock had been put back and things had returned to square one after 22 years during which Pakistan had forced two wars on India to grab Kashmir and Indian people and armed forces had made huge sacrifices to foil her plans.

Abdullah was sworn in as Chief Minister on February 25, 1975. It was only a formality. He had in fact been acting as de facto chief Minister since his return to Kashmir. Mir Kasim had been carrying on as de-jure Chief Minister under his guidance. Mrs. Gandhi was either blissfully ignorant about this reality or was winking over it out of expediency.

Congress Party which had absolute majority in the state Assembly extended its full support to Sh. Abdullah. Mrs. Gandhi expected Sh. Abdullah to reciprocate this gesture by joining the Congress. But Sh. Abdullah, refused to oblige her. He revived National Conference in the teeth of opposition of Mrs. Gandhi and was elected its President. Rank and file of plebiscite Front joined it en bloc. As a result National Conference returned on the Kashmir scene as a dominant political force with a bang. He then invited Congress legislators to join National Conference.

He began to put loyalists committed to him and his ideas about Semi-independent Kashmir at key posts and discontinued the practice of appointing nominees of the center to the posts of Chief Secretary and Inspector General of Police.

These developments upset Mrs. Gandhi and created a stir in her Party. Declaration of internal Emergency on June 25 and arrest of all opposition leaders including J.P. Narain, added another dimension to the growing tension and distrust between Sh. Abdullah and his National Conference on the one side and Mrs. Gandhi and her Congress Party on the other. Sh. Abdullah refused to arrest opposition leaders in the State and enforce censorship on the press.

Things came to a head after Janta Party victory in the general election of 1977. Congress Party withdrew its support to Sh. Abdullah and staked its claim to form a new Government in the state. But Sh. Abdullah proved too smart for the Congress. Taking advantage of a provision in the state constitution, he as Chief Minister recommended dissolution of the State Assembly. The Governor, L.K. Jha, had to comply.

National Conference contested the fresh election held in July 1977, under its own banner.

There was a triangular contest between National Conference, Janata Party to which many Congress men and disgruntled National Conference men had drifted and the Congress. Even though Sh. Abdullah suffered a heart-stroke on the eve of election and could not campaign actively, his party swept the polls in Kashmir valley and won some seats in Jammu as well. He thus rode back to power in his own right as National Conference Chief Minister of the State with a strength of fifty members in a house of seventy five.

This was the crowning glory for Sh. Abdullah. It proved that his sway over the hearts and minds

of Kashmiri Muslims had not been affected by the developments since 1953. It was a big personal blow for Mrs. Gandhi.

Having been bitten twice in 1953 and 1977 by his patrons in New Delhi, Sh. Abdullah now moved cautiously. He did not want to go on his travels again particularly in view of his growing years and failing health. He utilized this last spell of power, mainly for two things.

He tried to cut down the dependence of Kashmir on the center as far as possible. He asserted his right to have Chief Secretary and Inspector General of Police of his own choice instead of accepting the nominees of the center for these key posts. He dispensed with the central food subsidy which ensured supply of wheat, rice and sugar to citizens of the State at cheaper rates as compared to the rest of India. The process of Islamization of the state which he had begun, as soon as he came to power in 1947, which was continued more or less by his successors, was now accelerated. His distrust for Kashmiri Pandits also grew. He began to look upon them as fifth column of New Delhi who could desert him again in any new confrontation with the center.

Secondly he wanted to create proper condition for ensuring a smooth dynastic succession of his eldest son Dr. Farooq Abdulla to his 'gaddi' after his death. He soon realized that Mrs. Gandhi who returned to power at New Delhi in 1980 could be more helpful to him for achieving this objective because she also was interested in dynastic succession at New Delhi.

The situation created by Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan in 1979 also proved helpful to him. Rulers of Pakistan became absorbed in backing the Afghan insurgents against the Soviet backed new Afghan regime with direct and indirect support of USA. As a result Pak interest in Kashmir got somewhat diluted for the time being.

The military coup in Pakistan which brought General Ziaul Haq to power in the place of Z.A. Bhutto who was later arrested and executed had a sobering effect on Abdullah. He realized that only a democratic India could put up with all his pranks bordering on sedition for over twenty years and put him back. He therefore adopted a new strategy which had two planks. The first was to build up his own strength internally. He considered the growing Islamic consciousness and self-assertion in the Kashmir youth as an asset. He began to encourage it. The second was to keep Mrs. Gandhi in good humor so that she should lend her active support for his plan to ensure succession of Farooq Abdullah. This support had become vital for him because of opposition of a section of his party led by his own son-in-law G.M. Shah, who aspired to succeed him. Shah was senior to Farooq Abdullah in age and experience. He had been closely associated with Sh. Abdullah's struggles and was a senior member of his cabinet. He had a sizable support in National Conference Legislative party. Farooq Abdullah on the other hand was an upstart. He had spent long years in U.K. where he had married an English woman, taken up British citizenship and was closely associated with Jammu and Kashmir Liberation front (J.K.L.F.) a secessionist organisation which some Kashmiris settled in U.K. had set up with active support of Pakistan. Abdullah got Farooq elected President of National Conference in 1981. It was a clear signal to G.M. Shah and his supporters. Shah resigned from the cabinet and began to organize his forces. He banked on pro-Pak elements in the ruling party and the general Public.

Sh. Abdullah died on September 8, 1982. Pro-Pak elements had planned to bury him in Pakistan's flag. They had mobilized their support in the whole valley who thronged to Srinagar. But the situation was saved. News of Abdullah's death was suppressed until Farooq Abdullah was given the oath of office as Chief Minister. It was a hush hush affair. At the same time the army was alerted to thwart the plan to bury Abdullah draped in a Pakistani flag. Mrs. Gandhi herself moved to Srinagar and supervised the whole operation.

Death of Sh. Abdullah, who had become a legend in his lifetime, marked the end of an era in Kashmir. He had been dominating the Kashmir stage like a colossus since 1931 when he began his political career as founder President of Muslim conference under the patronage of the British. He then set his heart to gaining power in Kashmir and pursued this aim with single minded devotion until his death. He changed his patrons, postures and tactics to suit the needs of the changing situation but never deflected from his objectives. That was his real strength. All his life he remained Muslim first, Kashmir next, and Indian when convenience demanded it. He embodied Islamic consciousness and Kashmirihood of his people.

Sh. Abdullah was a controversial man as any effective leader has to be. Controversy about the political line and public postures of a politician who does not follow the dotted line is natural. It is unavoidable. Therefore to be controversial is not a handicap but an asset for a political leader with a mind and base of his own.

"Atish-e-Chinar," his voluminous autobiography in Urdu published after his death, presents him as he wanted to be known to posterity. It has revealed his real self as "India wins Freedom" the autobiography of Maulana Azad, revealed the Maulana. Like Maulana Azad, who is the only Indian leader besides Gandhi for whom he has shown some admiration and regard. Sh. Abdullah was a self centered and a self righteous man who considered himself to be a paragon of all virtues and true embodiment of Islamic ethos. That brings him out as an Islamic fundamentalist. His command over Koran which he could recite in a melodious tone was his greatest asset in keeping his Muslim flock with him. He invariably began his speech with recitation from Koran and punctuated them with recitation of "Kalma" at regular intervals. He thus combined the role of a religious leader, Imam, and a political leader, Khalifa, and mixed up his politics with Islam from the very beginning. Restitution to Muslims of some mosques like the "Pather Masjid" which is made entirely of the material of demolished temples, was the first major achievement of his political career. He made that Mosque in which performance of Namaz was taboo, because every pillar and stone of it smacked of idol worship. The head quarter of Muslim Conference, later converted into National Conference, and was given the name "Mujahid Manzil" the abode of fighters for Islam. Hazrat-Bal, another Muslim Shrine on the bank of the Dal lake was his main center for interaction with his followers. He built the first Arabic style mosque in Kashmir with a minaret in its compound.

His Islamic fundamentalist mind and communal outlook is evident from the fact that he has not written a word in condemnation of the killing of Kashmiri Pandits and dishonoring of their women by his followers in the first communal riot at Srinagar in 1931. All through his biography with one single exception, he has referred to Anant Nag, the district headquarter of the southern part of the valley, as Islamabad.

He is vociferous in his condemnation of the killings of Muslims in Jammu, particularly the few Kashmiri Tonga drivers, but has not said a word against killing of tens of thousands of innocent Hindus in Mujaffarabad, Muzaffarabad, Mirpur, Kotli, Bhimber, Rajauri and other areas that were over run by Pak invaders with the help of local Muslims. He had used choicest invectives against RSS, Praja Parishad and Bhartiya Jan Sangh forgetting that RSS workers bore the brunt of Pak agents and soldiers when he had fled from the valley and his followers were vying with one another in welcoming Pak "Mujahids."

It is an irony of fate and travesty of facts that the people who really worked and died for defense and integration of Jammu and Kashmir State with India are projected by him and his apologists as communalist and anti-National while those who first sided with Pak invaders and then worked for undermining the accession of the state to India and have continued to harp upon right of self determination ever since, are projected as nationalists and secularists by him.

In fact his understanding of the concept of secularism was even more distorted than that of Pt. Nehru. As a devout Muslim who considered Koran to be the last word of Allah, he could not be secular because Islam does not accept relevance of any form of worship other than the Islamic form and prohibits co-existence with non-believers, the Kafirs, in peace on equal terms. That explains why he did not persuade Hindu and Sikh refugees from even Pak occupied areas of the state to settle in Kashmir valley. He pushed them toward Jammu. He persistently refused to give citizenship right to over fifty thousand Hindu Sikh refugees from Pakistan who have settled in Jammu since 1947.

He did permit Kashmir Pandits to stay on in Kashmir. There were reasons for it. He himself was a scion of a Kashmir Pandit family. His great grandfather had been converted to Islam. Like Dr. Iqbal, who was his hero, he too, took pride in his Brahmin ancestry. But just as Iqbal used his inherited intelligence for the service of Islam and propounded the idea of Pakistan long before Rehmat Ali and Jinnah took it up, Abdullah used his intelligence to Islamize the administrative structure as no other Muslim ruler of Kashmir had done before him.

Islam sat lightly on Kashmir Muslims ever since they were forcibly converted in the 14th Century. They were Muslims but their psyche had continued to be pagan, Kashmiri language, customs, traditions and Saints like Lall Did and Nand Rishi bound him to their Hindu heritage and Hindu kinsmen. Abdullah Islamized their psyche with the help of Aligarh trained bureaucracy, Jamate-Islamic and Arabized Urdu. He talked of Kashmir's distinct identity to justify his demand for special status to Kashmir. But he took pains to sideline Kashmiri language which has a rich literature and is recognized as one of the national languages of India in the 8th schedule of Indian constitution. He did so consciously. Kashmiri language is derived from Sanskrit and links Kashmiris and other cultures with their Vedic Hindu past and Hindu compatriots. He wanted to cut this link. That is why he imposed Urdu as the state language to the exclusion of Kashmiri. With its Persian script and vocabulary drawn from Turkish, Arabic and Persian, Urdu which itself is a Turkish word, meaning "Laskar" or army has been one of the most important media of Muslim separatism. Muslim League made full use of it for partitioning India and rulers of Pakistan have been using it to establish a distinct Islamic identity of Pakistan. This one fact is enough to understand the mind and motivation of Sh. Abdullah.

Second reason why he suffered Kashmiri Pandits, was their utility for projecting himself and his followers as secular and for creating confidence in the minds of his Kashmiri patrons at New Delhi. But his experience of 1953 and 1977 created distrust for them in his mind. He came to believe that self-interest and cultural roots would drag them toward India and that they could become a hindrance in the way of realization of his dream of an independent Kashmir. This is evident from the advice he has given to Kashmiri Pandits in the last chapter of his autobiography which is devoted entirely to Kashmiri Pandits. He has urged upon them to "give up the role of spies and fifth columns of Delhi that they have been playing for years." No wonder that Kashmiri Hindus have been forced out of the valley so soon after his death. He had developed a love hate attitude toward Nehru dynasty. This is evident from his references to and assessment of Pt. Nehru, and Mrs. Gandhi all through his autobiography. He had no love lost for Sardar Patel but he respected his firmness and administrative capability. As a realist he might have behaved differently if Sardar Patel had been allowed to handle him and Jammu Kashmir State.

He had some soft corner for J. P. Narain. But it evaporated when J. P. debunked him for harping upon self-determination in a public meeting during J. P.'s only visit to the valley in the early seventies.

He mixed up Kashmir valley with whole of Jammu and Kashmir state whenever it suited him. But he remained rooted in Kashmir valley. He loved Kashmir and served it to the best of his capacity

all his life. Kashmiri Muslims reciprocated his love. But toward the end of his life, there was growing feeling among educated and politically conscious Kashmiris that he had amassed huge wealth and property and that basically he was for himself and his family and that but for his self-interest which pushed him toward India time and again, Kashmir might have become a part of Pakistan which has had a special emotional pull for most Kashmiri Muslims since the partition of India in 1947. That perhaps explains the wrath of Pak trained and inspired terrorists toward him. His "Mazar" has now to be guarded day and night by Indian security forces to prevent its destruction or defilement at the hands of Pro-Pak Kashmiri Mujahids.

So long as Abdullah lived he remained some kind of an enigma to his followers and critics alike. He was adept in speaking differently at different places. For Kashmir Muslims he was "Baba-i-quam" - father of the nation. He kept his hold on them till the last. Most of them thought that he would bring them independence. He did not want the valley to come under the grip of Pakistan. But his harangue about self determination for the people of Kashmir suited the rulers of Pakistan who rightly believed that Kashmir has to be part of India or Pakistan and that independence is not a feasible alternative. Sh. Abdullah shared this assessment of Pak rulers. That is why he preferred some link with India till he was able to secure full independence.

He wanted Kashmir to be an Islamic Sheikdom and took planned steps to Islamize it. He wanted to Islamize Laddakh and Jammu region as well. That was the real reason for his insistence on Article 370 and separate law of citizenship for the state. He used Muslim majority of Kashmir as an effective lever to influence the policies of the government of India in favor of Muslims in the name of secularism.

Even though Sh. Abdullah failed to realize his dreams of independent Kashmir in his life time, he left behind an administrative apparatus and a successor committed to realization of his dream. The developments in Kashmir since his death which have made it a theater of war against India by proxy are a direct legacy. He prepared the ground for it during his seven year rule of Kashmir from 1975 to 1982.

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The Storm Center of the World

Bal Raj Madhok

CHAPTER XVII

WAR BY PROXY

Ignominious defeat suffered by Pakistan in the war of 1971 and loss of East Pakistan without gaining Kashmir has been rankling in the minds of people and rulers of Pakistan ever since. Cadets of Pakistan's military academy at Kakul are known to swear an oath that they will avenge the defeat of 1971. That explains why the military budget has been continuously rising even though Pakistan has been cut to half in size and population. It has also been pursuing its nuclear program in a determined way and is reported to be in possession of a few atom bombs and nuclear war-heads.

As regards Kashmir it decided to change its tactics. Instead of making another direct armed assault from outside it decided to create favorable conditions for achieving its objectives "from within". Sh. Abdullah's return to power in the state in 1975 came handy to it.

As stated earlier, Sh. Abdullah had not changed his spots. The way Congress party tried to divest him of power once again in 1977 made him more circumspect and determined to have his way somehow. He was no longer suspect in the eyes of Pakistan and its agents and supporters in Kashmir. They appreciated his change of tactics and were prepared to extend him all co-operation in his confrontation with New Delhi.

The change of government at New Delhi in 1977 also helped him. Prime Minister Morarji Desai saw to it that election to the State Assembly held in July 1977 were fair and free. That enabled him to ride back to power on his own strength. Janata Government of which Bhartiya Jan Sangh was a major Partner could have cut the wings of Sh. Abdullah and ended the uncertainty about Kashmir's accession to India by abrogating article 370 of the Indian constitution. But the volte face of Jan Sangh leadership on this issue proved to be a shot in Abdullah's arm. He went ahead with this plan of making administrative apparatus of the state amenable to his plan and responsive to his intentions.

Soviet military involvement in Afghanistan in 1979 and return of Mrs. Gandhi to power at New Delhi in 1980 created a new situation. Attention of Pakistan got diverted to Afghanistan. It became the main conduit for the supply of US arms and dollars to Afghan rebels. Soviet Union then wanted India to break Pakistan's back, Pakistan on its part decided to bog down India in Punjab by extending support to Khalistani separatists. Sh. Abdullah therefore could go ahead with his plans consolidating his position by Islamizing and indoctrinating the administrative machinery of Kashmir with impunity.

Farooq Abdullah succeeded his father as Chief Minister on September 11, 1982. Sh. Abdullah

was reported to have left a political will or testament for the guidance of his successors. But it was never made public. But according to knowledgeable sources he had advised Farooq never to trust Mrs. Gandhi. Farooq Abdullah was fully committed to the ideas and ideals of his father. He was not handicapped by the emotional attachment and some feeling of gratefulness that Sh. Abdullah had toward Nehru dynasty. On the other hand he had developed close links with Pakistan based Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front during his long stay in Britain. He had also acquired British citizenship. He therefore could go farther than his father in India-baiting without any qualms of conscience.

Farooq's confrontation with Mrs. Gandhi and Congress Government at New Delhi began soon after his elevation to the gaddi of Chief Minister. Elections to the State Assembly were due in June 1983. He began to forge links with regional Parties and also had long parleys with Bhindranwale, the leader of Khalistan faction of Akalis at Amritsar. He expressed his happiness over the Congress debacle in Andhra Pradesh in January 1983. No wonder therefore that the attempt to force an alliance between his National Conference and Congress to contest the election jointly failed. He then began to project Congress (I) as Hindu Congress. He was reported to have said in one of his speeches that: "If the Hindu Congress" won in Kashmir, the Kashmiri Muslims would meet the fate of Muslims of Assam." This stand endeared him to Kashmiri Muslims who were already being swayed by Islamic fundamentalism and propaganda of Pakistan. He was returned to power with 46 seats in a House of 75; Congress got 26 seats.

Confrontation between National Conference and Farooq Abdullah, with Congress (I) and Mrs. Gandhi continued until he was replaced as Chief Minister by his rival G.M. Shah who claimed support of 12 members of the Assembly who had defected from National Conference in July 1984. Twenty six congress legislators extended their support to Shah government from outside.

G.M. Shah was known to be a clever and unscrupulous manipulator. He had developed close links with pro-Pak elements in Kashmir when Sh. Abdullah was in wilderness. He tried to bolster up Jamaat-e-Islami in Kashmir and Shiv Sena in Jammu to further Communalize the politics of the State. The communal violence of 1986 in Southern Kashmir in which scores of Hindu temples were destroyed and thousands of Hindus of Anantnag district were rendered homeless cooked his goose. It was alleged that Mufti Mohammed Sayeed, the President of Congress (I) who coveted the Chief Ministership and was as unscrupulous as G.M. Shah had a hand in organising that communal carnage. It gave Hindus of Kashmir a fore taste of what was in store for them.

G.M. Shah government was dismissed and Governor's rule was imposed on Jammu and Kashmir State in March, 1988. Governor Jagmohan who then assumed all executive powers acquitted himself very well. He toned up the administration and accelerated the pace of development in all the three regions of the state.

Fresh election was held in March 1987, Farooq Abdullah had learnt his lesson. He wanted to get back to power somehow. He succeeded in developing a personal equation with Rajiv Gandhi who had succeeded his mother Mrs. Gandhi in October 1984. This helped him to forge an alliance with Congress (I). It was not to the linking of a good section of Kashmiri Muslims.

Pro-Pak Islamic groups and parties of Kashmir Valley then forged unity under the banner of an organization called Muslim United Front (M.U.F) to challenge Congress National Conference alliance. It was dominated by Jamaat-e-Islami and its youth wing Jamaat-e-Tulbs.

The M.U.F. manifesto pledged to free the Muslims of Kashmir from the Brahmin imperialism of Delhi, and New Delhi's unwarranted interference in the affairs of the state." M.U.F. campaigned on anti-India fundamentalist platform. It stopped short of challenging Kashmir accession to India

to avoid disqualification under the Electoral Law. It could win only four seats though it polled about 30% vote in the valley. It alleged that Farooq Abudllah had rigged the election.

The new coalition government of congress (I) and national conference under the leadership of Farooq Abdullah which took office in March 1987 faced stiff opposition of M.U.F. and hostility of a large section of Kashmir Muslims from the very beginning. Farooq Abdullah was conscious of it. He therefore began to indulge in tight rope-walking. He spoke the language of Islamic fundamentalists in Kashmir and posed to be secularist in Jammu and a nationalist at New Delhi. When a deputation of Arya Samaj led by its leader Swami Anand Bodh Saraswati, met him for assistance to rebuild Arya Samaj temple at Srinagar which had been destroyed by Pakistani elements, he advised it not to rebuild the temple because it would be destroyed again. That gave an inkling of his mind.

Farooq also tried to win support of Khalistani elements in the State. It was widely believed that Hindu Sikh riots in Jammu in 1988 was indirectly engineered by him because he gave permission for a Sikh procession against the considered advice of district authorities. When the author met him at Jammu after these riots he justified the raising of pro-Pakistan slogans and asserted that Sikhs and Muslims have as much right on India as Hindus. This uncalled for outburst gave his real self away. It became clear that he was playing a double game and could not be trusted to safeguard national interests in that strategic border state. President Zia of Pakistan decided to exploit the situation in Kashmir and Islamized administrative apparatus in the state to launch his "operation Topak". Another factor that influenced his thinking was Soviet decision to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan.

The decision of USA and resultant thaw in the cold war between the two super powers shattered his dream of some kind of confederation of Islamic Afghanistan and Islamic Pakistan. He then decided to turn his attention to Kashmir. Large stocks of U.S. supplied arms for Afghan Mujahids and feasibility of diverting some of Afghan insurgents to Kashmir also encouraged him to adopt such a course.

According to the information obtained by the R.A.W., the Indian intelligence outfit, General Zia addressed a meeting of selected military commanders and top bosses of I.S.I. (Inter Services Intelligence) in April 1988 in which he spelt out his plan. According to the R.A.W. report Present Zia said: "Gentlemen, I have spoken on this subject at length before, therefore, I will leave out the details. As you know, due to our preoccupation in Afghanistan, in the service of Islam, I have not been able to put these plans before you earlier. Let there be no mistake, however, that our aim remains quite clear and firm and that is the liberation of the Kashmir Valley - our Muslim Kashmiri brothers cannot be allowed to stay with India for any length of time, now. In the past we had opted for, hamhanded military options and therefore, failed. So, as I have mentioned before, we will now keep our military option for the last moment as a coup de grace, if and when necessary. Our Kashmiri brethren in the valley though with us in their hearts and minds, are simple-minded folks and do not easily take to the type of warfare to which, say, a Punjabi or an Afghan takes to naturally, against foreign dominion.

"The Kashmiris however have a few qualities which we can exploit. First, his shrewdness and intelligence, second, his power to persevere under pressure; and the third, if I may so say, he is a master of political intrigue. If we provide him means through which he can best utilize these qualities he will deliver the goods. Sheer brute force is in any case not needed in every type of warfare, especially so in the situation obtaining in the Kashmir Valley, as I have explained earlier.

Here we must adopt those methods of combat which the Kashmiri mind can grasp and cope with in other words, a coordinated use of moral and physical means, other than military operations,

which will destroy the will of the enemy, damage his political capacity and expose him to the world as an oppressor. This aim, gentlemen, shall be achieved in three phases.

Phase 1

"In the first phase, which may if necessary, last a couple of years, we will assist our Kashmiri brethren in getting hold of the power apparatus of the State by political subversion and intrigue. We must therefore ensure that certain "favored politicians", from the ruling elite be selected who would collaborate with us in subverting all effective organs of the State? In brief, our plan for Kashmir which will be code named as "Op Topac" will be as follows.

(a) "A low level insurgency against the regime, so that it is under siege, but does not collapse as we would not yet want central rule imposed by Delhi.

(b) "We plant our chosen men in all the key positions; they will subvert the police forces, financial institutions the communications network and other important organizations.

(c) "We whip up anti-Indian feelings amongst the students and peasants, preferably on some religious issues, so that we can enlist their active support for rioting and anti-government demonstrations.

(d) "In collaborations with Sikh extremists, create chaos and terror in Jammu to divert attention from the valley at a critical juncture and discredit the regime even in the Hindu mind.

Phase 2

(a) "Exert maximum pressure on the Siachen Kargil and Rajauri Poonch sectors to force the Indian army to deploy reserve formation outside the main Kashmir valley.

(b) "Attack and destroy base depots and HQ located at Srinagar, Pattan, Kupwara, Baramulla, Bandipur and Chowkiwala by covert action at a given time.

(c) "Finally a special force under selected retired officers belonging to Azad Kashmir, with the hard core consisting of Afghans, will be ready to attack and destroy airfields radio stations, block Banihal tunnel and the Kargil Leh Highway.

Phase 3

(a) "Detailed plans, for the liberation of Kashmir Valley and establishment of an independent Islamic State in the third phase, will follow. We do not have much time. Maximum pressure must be exerted before the general elections in India and before Indian army reserves which are still bogged down in Sri Lanka become available. By the grace of God, we have managed to accumulate large stocks of modern arms and ammunition from US consignments intended for Afghan Mujahideen. This will help our Kashmiri brethren achieve their goals.

(b) Preparation for this phase must be made by means of a big exercise-the biggest ever held in Pakistan.

(e) "I need not emphasize any further that a deliberate and objective assessment of the situation must be insured at each stage, otherwise a stalemate will follow with no good for Pakistan."

The first phase of "OP-TOPAC" was put into action by the middle of 1988. It began with anti-India tirade all over the valley and mushrooming of a number of underground militant organizations like J.K.L.F. and Hizb-i-Islami. The M.U.F. members resigned their membership of the State Assembly and began to support under ground activities openly. Farooq Abdullah and his government turned a Nelson's eye toward such activists. But he kept Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in good humor and therefore cared little about the criticism in the Indian Press and growing resentment among Nationalists in all these three regions of the state.

The death of general Zia in a Pakistan Airforce accident in August 1988 made little difference to the execution of operation TOPAC. Apart from the fact that Benazir was not her own master and that Pak army under General Beg and I.S.I. had full grip over the President of Pakistan who held the whip hand, she too was as intransigent about Kashmir, for political and tactical reasons, as her opponents. The biggest military exercises of Pakistan named "Zarb-i-Momen" (Hit of the faithful) was held on schedule and General Beg claimed that Pak army was fully prepared not only for defense but also to carry war into the enemy's territory. The terminology, the timing and the areas selected for "Zarb-i-Momen" clearly showed that the exercises were a dress-rehearsal of a new war with India.

Change of government at New Delhi toward the end of November 1989 and the kidnapping of Rubiya, the daughter of the new Kashmir Home Minister at New Delhi, Mufti Mohammed Sayeed, gave a new turn to the developing situation. There was a general suspicion that it was a pre-arranged affair. The release of the five top terrorists in exchange for Dr. Rubaiyya in Srinagar made it clear that the situation had become too grim and unless drastic steps were taken, Kashmir might be lost. The public outcry forced V.P. Government to send Jagmohan as Governor of the State for the second time. Jagmohan knew too much about Farooq Abdullah and his team which included some of "Pakistan's favored politicians." Farooq therefore resigned clearing the way for imposition of governor's rule.

It was later established that Rubaiyya's kidnapping was a probing action of agents of Pakistan. It was neither a surprise for Rubaiyya, nor perhaps for her father. There was no danger to her life that perhaps explains why all plans to free her by trained commando were vetoed.

Jagmohan with his commitment to national interests, deep understanding of men and affairs in Kashmir and vast administrative experience, was able to turn the tables on Pak agents and terrorist within a short time. This was not to the liking of the friends of Pakistan, and pseudo secularists. Bhartya Janta Party (B.J.P.) which, with a strength of about 90 members in Lok Sabha, held a whip hand, lacked proper leadership. It went on harping on keeping V.P. Singh government going instead of taking a principled and firm stand on any issues of national importance during the period of eleven months when it sustained V.P. Government. It withdrew its support on the issue of the arrest of its leader L. K. Advani and not on any substantive national issue. Had it taken a firm and unequivocal stand, it could have foiled the conspiracy to remove Jagmohan from Kashmir.

Exit of Jagmohan in May 1990 came as a relief to Pakistan and its agents in Kashmir. They have been on the rampage ever since. The indoctrinated Muslim bureaucracy has fulfilled the expectations of Pakistan. It has been waging a war of nerves against India from within. The prolonged strike of over one lakh Muslim employees proved that OP TOPAC as planned by Zia was moving on the charted course.

Jagmohan has given a detailed account of the growth of insurgency in Kashmir and the role of

Sh. Abdullah and Farooq Abdullah on the one side and an indecisive leadership at New Delhi on the other in creating and aggravating the prevailing situation in Kashmir in his book, "My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir." Because of the inside information and documents available to him, his book is an authentic record of developments in Kashmir since 1981.

According to him, the role played by the two Abdullahs has been very dubious throughout. Farooq had been a part of the JKLF outfit during his long sojourn in Britain. His speeches of those days which were repeated by the Pak Radio in January 1990, clearly gave out his commitment to "Independence" for Kashmir. According to Farooq's own admission before the India mediapersons in 1990, he had asked his National Conference workers to go to Pakistan to get training in arms. They have been collaborating with JKLF insurgents. It is significant that during the years when Zia's Operation TOPAC has been taking shape in the valley, Farooq has been keeping away from Kashmir. He has been spending most of his time in UK since 1988.

Jagmohan has taken George Fernandes whom V.P. Singh appointed his Minister for Kashmir Affairs also to task for clandestine meetings with insurgents over his head and for helping those who have been carrying on a campaign of disinformation in favor of insurgents in India and the world. His indictment of successive governments of India is as incisive as his indictment of Abdullah.

He has made it clear that the "infirmities and negative forces that beset the Indian social, political and moral order and are at root cause of Kashmir troubles can be removed only by a reformed rejuvenated and motivated India with a new vision and not by an Indian that has become a hunting ground for small politics and whose shallow and superficial approach has exceeded all limits in Kashmir."

Things have been deteriorating since the recall of Jagmohan from Kashmir. Fall of the V.P. Singh government and its replacement by the Chandra Shekhar government in November, 1990 made things worse, because Chandra Shekhar was totally dependent on the support of the Rajiv Congress. Rajiv in his turn was in the pocket of Farooq Abdullah who suddenly returned to India and began to have parleys for revival of state assembly and his re-induction as chief minister. Fall of the Chandra Shekhar government and ordering of fresh elections for Lok Sabha put cold water on his plans and he returned to UK.

A new situation was created by the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi on May 21, 1991 and emergence of Congress as the largest party but fully short of clear majority in the new Lok Sabha. P.V. Narsimha Rao, who has been leading a minority congress government at New Delhi since June 21, 1991, is an antinationalist with a long record of service to the country. But he is handicapped. Apart from the minority character of his government, he is being pressured by the Rajiv lobby to the Nehru-Rajiv line on Kashmir and other issues.

Meanwhile, developments in Pakistan and rapid changes in the USSR where communism has been discarded and communist system has been dismantled have created new challenges and opportunities for India to put its home in order and adopt a realistic and national approach to the Kashmir problem.

Nawaz Sharif, who succeeded Benazir Bhutto as prime minister of Pakistan in 1990, has stepped up support to Kashmiri insurgents and launched a world-wide diplomatic offensive against India over Kashmir. The resolution passed by the conference of Islamic countries in July, 1991 supported the Pak stand on Kashmir.

The situation inside the Valley, where Pak trained and supported insurgents have again the upper

hand is quite tempting for Pakistan. In a way, it is now or never situation so far as Pakistan is concerned.

But its internal situation and the sea change in the international situation because of developments in the USSR are acting as a danger in Pakistan. It can no longer bank on the USA. On the other hand, the end of Nehru dynasty has opened the way for the rise of new leadership at New Delhi which may discard the Nehruvian policy in regard to Kashmir and adopt a nationalist approach together with a reciprocal policy toward Pakistan.

Despite these handicaps, Pakistan may be impelled by the situation it has created in Kashmir to go to the logical end. Therefore the possibility of another Indo- Pak war which may drive both into a third world war cannot be ruled out. That points to the urgency of finding a feasible solution of the problem at the earliest.

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The Storm Center of the World

Bal Raj Madhok

CHAPTER XVIII

THE WAY OUT

The foregoing study of the Kashmir problem, its background, origin, growth and present character has made it clear that it is basically a fall-out of unnatural partition of united India in 1947 on the basis of claim of the followers of Islamism to be a separate nation. Islamism is comparable to communism. It is more an expansionist political ideology than a spiritual tradition. But unlike communism, reason has no place in it. The concepts of Millat and "Kufr", of "Dar-Ul-Islam," and "Dar-Ul-Harab" and "Jehad" ~vhich are basic to Islam, lie at the root of Islamic separationism and the world wide Muslim problem. Ideology and methodology of Pakistan is based on them. They preclude co-existence of votaries of Islamism in peace on equal terms with non- Muslims anywhere in the world, particularly in countries run on the basis of democratic principles of one man one vote and majority rule. Wherever they happen to be in majority, they oppress non-Muslims as in Pakistan and Bangla Desh and wherever they happen to be in minority with pockets of influence, they become a factor of disruption and subversion. This is proved by the experience of India, and Cyprus in our own times.

Therefore, so long as Pakistan exists as an Islamic State it will continue to exist to keep Kashrnir problem alive. As such Kashmir problem is a part of the Pakistan problem. The two cannot be separated.

World knows of many problems that have persisted for decades and even eenturies, some of them were created by major wars and convulsions in the past and may be resolved by new wars or convulsions. Partition of India was one such major conclusion. But there is no such thing as a settled fact in history. Another convulsion or accident of history may end Pakistan. Until then India will have to live with the problem of Pakistan and its off- shoots like the Kashmir Problem in some form or other.

But that does not and should not mean that no effort should be made to solve the Kashmir problem as it exists today and allow things to drift.

Kashmir problem is basically an internal problem of India. It was created by Pak aggression, against Jammu and Kashmir State which became aggression against India when that state acceded to India in October 1947. India was in a position to tackle it effectively on its own strength. But its unrealistic leadership gave an external dimension to it when it took the matter of Pak aggression to UNO. This enabled Pakistan to internationalize the issue with the overt and covert support of USA. The issue then got so much bogged down in power politics of the two super powers with their conflicting global interests that the internal aspect of the problem got over shadowed and side-lined by its external aspect.

Recent international developments in the wake of retreat of communism and dismantling of the Soviet system have initiated a new situation. Cold war is virtually over; USA no longer needs Pakistan as a front line state to contain Soviet Union and therefore has no compulsion to back Pakistan over Kashmir. That explains American suggestion to Pakistan to accept cease-fire line as de-facto international boundary and stop supplying arms and giving training to Kashmir terrorists and subversives. It is no longer interested in supporting the Pak demand of self determination for Kashmir through plebiscite in terms of UN resolutions. India, therefore, can now go ahead to tackle the problem uninhibited by international reactions. As a first step it should formally withdraw its complaints to UN made in January 1948. That complaint and UN resolutions about Kashmir had, in fact become irrelevant after Pak attempts to grab Kashmir by unprovoked wars in 1965 and 1971. India therefore should forget UNO so far as Kashmir is concerned, and ask it to withdraw UNO observer from there.

Even though India has legal claim over the whole of Jammu and Kashmir state including Pak occupied areas, it should treat Cease-Fire line now called "line of Actual Control", as international boundary between India and Pakistan. This will not made any material difference to Indian position in regard to Kashmir. It is well known that Pt. Nehru and Mrs. Gandhi were prepared to bury the hatchet, forego Indian legal claim to Pak occupied part of the state and accept cease-fire line as international boundary. Pakistan did not respond positively because it did not want to give up its claim on Kashmir Valley on the "principle" that as a Muslim majority region contiguous to Pakistan it should be included in Pakistan. This "principled Stand" of Pakistan can be countered by taking a similar "principled stand" in regard to Lahore and Thar-Par-Kar now held by Pakistan. Lahore was contiguous to Hindu majority part of Punjab and lies to the East of the Ravi which could form a natural boundary between East Punjab and West Punjab. Majority of its inhabitants were Hindus and they owned over 80% of its movable and immovable property. Therefore according to the criteria laid down for Radcliffe commission, Lahore should have been awarded to India.

Thar-Par-Kar district of Sindh originally belonged to Jodhpur state It should have been restituted to Jodhpur before the British left India for good. Even otherwise it should have been awarded to India because it is contiguous to India and more than 80% of its population was Hindu.

Had India followed the example of Islamic Pakistan it too could have changed the complexion of population of Kashmir valley as Pakistan has done in Lahore and Thar- Par-Kar. India therefore would be perfectly justified in laying claim on Lahore and Thar-Par-Kar if Pakistan persists in claiming Kashmir for Pakistan.

Insistence of Pakistan on the right of self determination to Kashmir through plebiscite is not tenable. UN resolutions on the subject have no relevance now. Apart from the fact that Pakistan never fulfilled the pre condition, for holding a plebescite, it negated those resolutions when it took to arms in contravention of those resolutions to grab Kashmir by force in 1965 and 1971. Moreover right of self determination cannot be given to a part of constituent of a sovereign state. That would lead to disintegration of many of the major states of the world including Pakistan and USA.

USA which had no basic geographical or cultural unity like India and which had come into existence by voluntary union of a number of independent states fought a civil war to deny this right to its southern states Pakistan has been doggedly refusing this right to the people of Sindh. Baluchistan and Pakhtoonistan want to get out of Pakistan. Therefore plebiscite in Kashmir in any shape or form must be ruled out.

Indian leadership has itself to blame for the persistence of Pakistan and its supporters in the

demand for plebiscite because it failed to adopt a correct and realistic stand about Kashmir from the very beginning. This became clear to me when this matter cropped up during my talk with Philip-Talbot, the American Secretary of State for South Asia at Washington in 1964. He asked me whether it was not a fact that majority of Kashmir Muslims were for Pakistan. On getting an affirmative reply, he wanted to know why India was standing in the way of Kashmir going to Pakistan. I then asked him whether the same situation did not prevail in some of the Southern states of USA like Alabama and Mississippi. He agreed that it was so. In reply to my query why USA was not permitting them to get out of USA. He explained that they could not be allowed to secede because they were part of a sovereign state and the US Constitution did not permit secession of any part of the United States. I then told him that the same was true of India and Indian Constitution. I explained to him the implication of loss of Kashmir for the security of India as a whole. He complimented me for "Candid and Convincing exposition of India's stand "and wondered why India had been beating about the bush instead of presenting its case candidly and forth-rightly. This lack of candidness and tendency to take a moralistic and holier than thou stance compromised India's position. Had Indian spokesmen taken a realistic and factual stand, and laid stress on the fact of accession which made Jammu & Kashmir an inalienable part of sovereign India, it could have avoided many of the internal and external complications which have made the issue intractable.

Developing national and international situation demands that Indian leaders and policy makers adopt a nationalistic and realistic approach to their problems instead of looking for alibis or posing as idealists. Accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India was a conscious decision by its ruler who placed wider human interests of his people above his personal interests in a moment of crisis. Kashmir is part of India because of the instrument of Accession and liberation of a major part of it from Pak occupation by Indian armed forces and not because of Sh. Abdullah and the people of Kashmir nor has Kashmir anything to do with the secular character of the Indian state. These are extraneous matters which have no relevance and relationship to the basic issue.

False notions about secularism, secular character of Kashmiri Muslims and their voluntary decision to put their lot with India created a kind of dilemma in the mind of Indian leadership. It accepted the accession but felt shy of basing its claim on Kashmir on the fact of accession. Therefore in practice it treated Kashmir as part of India. This confusion lay at the root of many blunders that Nehru committed in regard to Kashmir in the early formative period. The most dangerous of them was succumbing to the pressure of Sh. Abdullah for a special status for Kashmir and incorporation of Article 370 in the Indian Constitution.

This article 370 which gave constitutional sanction to Kashmir having a separate constitution, a separate law of citizenship and separate flag has been the main factor in creating the widespread feeling.

Kashmiris believed that Kashmir was not India and that its future had yet to be settled. The resultant uncertainty has proved to be the biggest asset of Pakistan and its agents in Kashmir. Therefore abrogation of this Article and scrapping of separate constitution of Kashmir and extension of Indian constitution in full to that state has become the first necessity to tackle the Kashmir problem.

There is no constitutional or legal hitch in abrogation of this article and full integration of Jammu and Kashmir state with the rest of India. It has no connection with accession of the state to India. The accession took place in October 1947 while this article was added to the constitution two years later on October 1949. It does not hinge upon this article in any way.

Article 370 was in fact the pound of flesh that Sh. Abdullah exacted from obliging Pt. Nehru as a

price for his support to Kashmir's inclusion in India in the case of a plebiscite which was looming large in the air at that time. Pt. Nehru directed him to meet Law minister and Chairman of the Drafting committee of the Constituent Assembly, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, for incorporating a suitable article in the Constitution of India which may enable Kashmir to have a separate constitution, separate law of citizenship and enjoy a special autonomous status. Dr. Ambedkar himself told the author that he flatly refused to accept Abdullah's plea. He told him that as Law Minister of India he could not give a status to Jammu and Kashmir which would make it a republic within a republic in which India and Indians will have only responsibilities and no rights.

Nehru then asked N. Gopal Swamy Ayyangar, another Minister in his cabinet, to move the Constituent Assembly for inclusion of a special article in regard to Kashmir as desired by Abdullah. But his proposal met with stiff resistance from a large majority of members who saw no justification for making an exception in the case of Jammu and Kashmir. His proposal was accepted only after he gave specific assurance on behalf of the government that it was a purely temporary provision to tide over the exigency created by the UN resolution. That is why it was put in the chapter which includes temporary and transitional provisions of the constitution.

To treat this article as a permanent feature of the Constitution and oppose its abrogation has no justification whatsoever. Sovereign parliament of India which has made about seventy amendments in the Constitution of India can surely amend or abrogate this Article which has been specifically described as "temporary" by the Constitution itself.

In fact there is no need to amend the Constitution because the procedure to make this Article inoperative has been laid down in subclause (3) of this article itself. It reads, "notwithstanding anything in the foregoing provisions of this Article the President can, by public notification, declare that this article shall cease to be operative or shall be operative only with such exceptions and modifications and from such date as he may specify."

The rider that the "recommendations of the Constituent Assembly of the state shall be necessary before the President issues such a notification" has ceased to have any validity because the Constituent Assembly of the State ceased to exist in 1956. Therefore the decision to make this Article inoperative can be taken by the President on his own or on the advice of his council of Ministers, even without making any reference to the Parliament.

Once this Article is abrogated or ceases to be operative, Jammu and Kashmir state would ipso facto be brought on par with other acceding states. Its separate constitution will then have to go and Indian Constitution in full will have to be extended to the state together with the law about citizenship.

This one step will go a long way in removing uncertainty about future of Kashmir from the minds of Kashmiris and impress upon them that Government of India means business and that the finality of accession of the State to India cannot be questioned.

Some safeguards about ownership of land and preference to local people in certain matters can be given to Kashmir within the framework of Indian Constitution as has been done in the case of Mizoram, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh.

Reorganization of the State

Along with the abrogation of Article 370, steps should be taken to reorganize the state so as to give separate statehood to Kashmir and Jammu region and Union territory status to Ladakh. Such a reorganization should have been done long back. It was a mistake to keep this state out of

the purview of state Re-organization Commission.

Such a reorganization would go a long way toward resolving some of the internal contradictions and problems of this state. It will satisfy political aspirations of people of Kashmir, Jammu and Laddakh and preserve and protect distinct identity of Kashmir as also of Laddakh and Jammu.

Kashmir valley is surrounded by high mountains from all sides which remain snowbound for many months in a year. This has given it a separate geographical and historical identity. That explains why it remained a separate kingdom or separate province of various Indian empires all through the history.

Language has much to do with preservation of cultural identity of any area. Kashmiri language, originally written in Sharda script, a sister of Dev Nagri Script, is a developed language with a rich literature. It has been included in the 8th schedule of the Indian constitution. Making Kashmiri the language of administration and education in Kashmir valley will go a long way toward preserving its distinct Kashmiri identity. It will also strengthen its cultural links with the rest of India because Kashmir too is an Indo-Vedic language derived from Sanskrit.

Imposition of Urdu as state language by Sh. Abdullah instead of Kashmiri was a retrograde step. It was aimed at weakening the links of Kashmir with India and bringing it closer to Pakistan which adopted Urdu written in Persian script as its national language after it came into existence. Acceptance of Kashmir with the option to write it in Persian or Dev Nagri Script will not only safeguard Kashmiri identity of Kashmir, but will also give a boost to the development of Kashmiri language and literature. A phonetic script like Dev Nagri script is much more suited to Kashmiri language than Persian script.

Economically Kashmir with its 30 lakh population and valuable resources of timber, fruits, handicrafts and great potential for tourism will be much more viable than many other states of the Indian Union.

Punjabi speaking Uri-Tithwal area lying between Kashmir Valley and Pak occupied territory of the state should be separated from Kashmir and made a centrally administered security belt. This area lies outside Kashmir valley. There is little in common between the people of Kashmir and the people of this belt. In fact there is lot of distrust between them. The simple folk of this area resent domination of Kashmiris over them. This area can be a kind of buffer between Kashmir and the so called "Azad Kashmir." These steps would go a long way in satisfying political aspirations of the people of all the three regions of the state, safeguarding distinct identity of Kashmir valley and checkmating Pak designs on it.

Kashmir problem is basically a religio-political and not socio-economic problem. From the economic point of view average Kashmiri is much better off than his compatriots in most parts of the rest of India. It is among the most affluent parts of India. Those who keep harping upon unemployment and economic hardship of Kashmiri youth as the main cause of unrest and insurgency in Kashmir are either ignorant or dishonest.

Kashmir has nothing to do with the secular character of the Indian state. India is secular because it is basically Hindu. The day it would lose its Hindu character, it will cease to be secular. Therefore those who keep harping upon India's need for Kashmir to preserve its secular character indulge in self deceptions. There is no question of India needing Kashmir or Kashmir needing India. They are one and indivisible.

The one genuine grievance of the people of Kashmir is that they have not been getting

governments and Chief Ministers of their choice. This grievance can and should be removed by ensuring that elections to the new state Assembly of Kashmir, whenever they are held, are fair and free and that elected members are left free to choose their Chief Minister and Government without undue interference from New Delhi. But this demands restoration of normalcy within the valley and normalization of relations between Kashmir and the center in terms of the Indian Constitution. Nehru Abdullah accord and Mrs. Gandhi - Abdullah accord point to abnormal relationship. They never had any constitutional validity. They must be discarded to enable Kashmir to enjoy autonomy as guaranteed by the Indian Constitution to all its constituent units. Provision can be made in the Constitution for some special treatment to border states.

The administrative apparatus in Kashmir has been subverted in a planned way over the years. This has proved to be the biggest asset of Pakistan in the war by proxy that it has been waging since 1988. This apparatus should be thoroughly overhauled and nationalized. Any government which permits or tolerates subversion of its administrative apparatus has no right to exist.

In the field of development the immediate need of Kashmir is an augmentation of power supply. With the depletion of forests, lack of adequate electric power has caused avoidable hardships to the people. Therefore, top priority should be given to generation and supply of electric power. There is enough potential for Hydro- Power in the Valley. It can be supplemented by supply of power from the National Power Grid. Salal and Dul- Hasti projects on the Chenab in Jammu region can generate enough power to serve the needs of not only Jammu and Kashmir but of Punjab also.

Another cause of hardship to the people of Kashmir is frequent closure of the Jammu Srinagar high way. An alternative link can be developed by building all weather road linking Srinagar with Pathankot via Sinthan Pass, Kishtwar, and Chamba and with Jammu via Kishtwar and Udhampur.

This road would open new areas for development besides giving a boost to tourism. Dalhausi, Chamba, Bhadarwah, Kishtwar, Batote Jammu circuit would bring tourists both national and international, in touch with some of the more breathtaking beauty spots of the world. The old Mughal road via Nandi Marga pass runs too close to the Cease-Fire Line. It would not be safe from security angle.

Jammu region stretching from Pathankot to Panchal range which divides it from Kashmir area of over ten thousand square miles and population of over thirty lakhs is the richest and strategically the most important region of the state. It has been getting a raw deal from successive Kashmiri dominated Governments of Jammu and Kashmir.

Formation of separate Jammu state would satisfy political aspirations of its people, quicken its economic development and remove the bogey of Hindu domination over Kashmir. It would be economically viable with big potential for tourism, forest based industries and power generation. Contentment of the people of Jammu would prove an asset for Kashmir also, because it provides the link between Kashmir and the rest of India.

Laddakh region stretching from Padar in Jammu to Tibet is the largest but most sparsely populated region of the state. Muslim majority Kargil area which was part of Baltistan region, now under Pak-occupation, was tagged on to Laddakh after Cease-Fire. It should be given the option to be included in Laddakh or made a centrally administered area.

As a Union Territory Laddakh could be developed fast as a great tourist attraction. Its Capital town Leh, is among the highest human habitats in the world. It is linked by motorable roads to Srinagar via Yojila Pass and to Chandigarh via Rohtang Pass. In view of strategic importance of

Laddakh and widespread distrust and disillusionment of its people with Kashmiri dominated administration, it would be dangerous to delay the acceptance of longstanding demand of its people for separation from Kashmir.

To ensure coordinated development of the three new states and centrally administered areas, a development council on the model of North Eastern Council should be set up. Himachal Pradesh can also be included in such a council because of its close links with Jammu and Laddakh. All the twenty states may also have a common governor and common high court.

While respecting the autonomy of all the three regions and avoiding undue interference in the democratic process and choice of Chief Ministers by the respective Legislature, the central Government should see to it that no liberty is given to any person, party or group to interfere with the legitimate activities of the Defense forces or harm security interests of the country.

Implementation of the steps mentioned above and prosecution of the "war by Proxy" to the finish can go on side by side. Abrogation of Article 370 and creation of Uri-Tithwal security belt will be helpful in restoration of Law and Order and checking Pak infiltration from Pakistan.

Announcement about reorganization of the state will have a salutary effect on the minds of the common people of Kashmir Valley. It will remove the fear of Hindu domination that has been systematically created in their minds. They will get a clear signal that their political aspirations and Kashmiri identity can, and will be, satisfied within the framework of the Indian Constitution. Most thinking Kashmiris know that rulers of Pakistan are not interested in independence for Kashmir. They want to annex it to Pakistan. They also know that Pakistani, particularly Pathans and Punjabis, are more interested in using Kashmir as their pleasure ground than in its economic development and general welfare of its people. The memories of 1947 when Pak invaders turned every mosque in Baramula into a brothel are being revived by the experience of Kashmiri girls who have been lured to Pakistan for training of arms. This is having a salutary effect on Kashmiris who are basically a peace loving people. Because of insular character of Kashmir and their experience of non- Kashmir rule they have developed distrust for all non- Kashmiris. Islamic frenzy has been swaying their minds and hearts for some time past. But it cannot be sustained for long if they are made to realize that they can enjoy self-rule with added benefits as an integral part of India.

At the same time it is necessary that no softness is shown to Pak agents and their patron, Pakistan. Pakistan has gone too far. Things within the valley were never as hopeful for it as they are now. Its military position is now better than ever before. It has an arsenal of nuclear weapons also. Therefore any talk of normalization of relations with Pakistan is just hogwash. Pakistan may force another war on India any time. India, however, will have to adopt new reciprocal policy to ward Pakistan.

Future of Kashmiri Pandits

Then there is the question of future of Kashmiri Pandits. Forced exodus of about two hundred thousand Hindus from Kashmir is the most distressing fallout of the recent developments in Kashmir Valley. All secessionist organizations and elements of Kashmiris have been working together to drive out or eliminate the Hindu minority from there.

Kashmiri Hindus who are now better known as Kashmiri Pandits have been living as a besieged community since the advent of Muslim rule in Kashmir in the middle of the 14th century. They got relief when Maharaja Ranjit Singh conquered and annexed Kashmir to his kingdom in 1819 and made it a separate province of his expanding kingdom of Lahore.

They occupied a place of pride in Kashmir during hundred years of Dogra rule. They made the best use of the facilities for higher education and improved communications with the rest of India.

With the accession of the Jammu and Kashmir state to India by Maharaja Hari Singh in October 1947, a new chapter in the life of Kashmiri Pandits began. Many of them joined with Sh. Abdullah when he converted his Muslim Conference into National Conference in 1939. But Sh. Abdullah developed distrust for them soon after he came to power in the wake of the accession of the state to India. He took full advantage of his Kashmiri Pandit associates to extract maximum concessions from the central government at New Delhi led by the most celebrated Kashmiri Pandit of our time, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru.

But he soon found out that like other Hindus the first loyalty of Kashmiri Pandits also was toward India and they would not stand by him in his endeavors to make Kashmir an independent State outside India.

Sh. Abdullah devoted one full chapter to Kashmiri Pandits in his autobiography. He advised them to give up "the role of spies and fifth columns of the central government at Delhi." This gave a clear indication of his belief that Kashmiri Pandits may become a hindrance in the way of separating Kashmir from the rest of India and making it a separate sultanate or Islamic Republic.

The recent developments in Kashmir's Valley and the united efforts of protagonists of Kashmir's merger with Pakistan and advocates of independent Kashmir to drive out Kashmiri Pandits from the valley and liquidate those who have not left the valley so far is the logical follow-up of the above assessment of Sh. Abdullah about Kashmiri Pandits regarding their first loyalty to India. Kashmir valley is now almost completely Muslim in its demographic complexion and Kashmiri Pandits are running from pillar to post for survival. This has added a new dimension to Kashmir problem.

Can Kashmiri Pandits go back to the valley or will they have to wander around India and the world like the Jews who were driven out of Israel many centuries ago? Their plight in their own country is the greatest challenge to the capacity and credibility of Indian leadership. It is my considered view that not only the future of Kashmiri Pandits is tied up with the future of Kashmir Valley, but the future of India in relation to Kashmir is also tied up with them. If Kashmir is to remain a part of India, Kashmiri Pandits will have to go back to Kashmir Valley not only for their own sake but also for the sake of wider interests of India as a whole. Their return and rehabilitation in Kashmir Valley must be part of any solution of the Kashmir problem.

But now it will not be possible for them to live with Kashmiri Muslims in the same Mohallahs and neighborhoods. Islamic fundamentalism which does not permit co-existence of Muslims and non-Muslims in peace on equal terms anywhere in the world has got complete grip over the minds of the new generation of Kashmiri Muslims. Kashmiri Pandits therefore will have to live in separate settlements within Kashmir valley.

Sh. Abdullah has written in his autobiography that some Kashmiri Pandit leaders had suggested as early as 1890 that Kolgam area in south Kashmir adjacent to Jammu region should be made a separate Kashmiri Pandit district of Kashmir. He has not given the reason why such a demand was made and what was the exact motivation of those who made it. But the situation which has now developed in Kashmir has proved the forboding of those who raised the demand a hundred years ago, to be correct. A sanctuary or a separate district for re-settlement of Kashmiri Pandits in the southern part of Kashmir Valley has now become an imperative necessity. It is the only effective and feasible way of preserving Kashmiri Pandits in their own home land.

Such a reserved area or district for exclusive resettlement of displaced Kashmiri Hindus should stretch from the Jawahar tunnel under Banihal Pass to Zojila Pass. It should include Verinag Springs, Acchabal, Kokarnag, Mattan, Martand and Pahalgam besides the holy cave of Amarnath. Mattan and Amarnath are the holiest spots in the valley which attract thousands of pilgrims and tourists from all over India. Pahalgam is the most popular tourist spot for Indian tourists. Therefore, it should not take long to develop this area as a major pilgrimage center and tourist attraction of the valley. This will not only quicken the development of this area but will benefit the rest of the valley also.

Indian industrialists and Kashmiri Pandit entrepreneurs can be persuaded to invest in this area for its development. It should be able to provide security and comfortable livelihood to all the displaced Kashmiri Hindus who are now living in agony in camps at Jammu, Delhi and other towns of north India.

To this end, the following two things will be helpful:

1. A Kashmiri Hindu Resettlement Fund should be created. Major contributions to this fund will have to come from central government and state governments. Substantial amounts can be raised from the general public also.
2. A Kashmiri Hindu Resettlement Board be set up. It should include representatives of the central and state governments and Kashmiri Hindus. It must undertake survey and construction of resettlement colonies and townships in this reserved area. The migrant families can also contribute their mite in the construction of the houses which could be transferred to them as permanent allottees on completion.

This plan, if executed quickly and efficiently, can save Kashmiri Pandits from their present agony and reserve their Kashmiri identity along with the identity of the Kashmir valley. Some seats can also be reserved for them in the legislative assembly of Kashmir.

The plan of action for a solution of Kashmir problem given above is practical and feasible. It can safeguard the unity, distinct identity and autonomy of Kashmir Valley without disturbing the unity of India. The suggestion about a distinct area in South Kashmir to be earmarked for the resettlement of Kashmiri Hindus who have been driven out of their homeland is just, fair and workable. Kashmiri Pandits, the original inhabitants of the valley who have preserved its culture, language and way of life through the centuries have inalienable rights on Kashmir. They must get a share of the territory of Kashmir where they may be able to live with honor and without fear.

Kashmiris can have a government of their choice like the people of other states through fair and free democratic elections and without interference from outside. But conditions must be first created for holding elections and starting the political process. The present situations in the valley are not conducive to it. Steps will have to be taken to weed out the terrorists and Pak agents first. The sooner it is done the better it would be for all concerned.

It would be wrong to compare Kashmir with the states of USSR which are falling apart. Unlike India which has been a distinct geographical and cultural entity since the dawn of history, USSR has been a continuation of the colonial empire of Russia comparable to colonial empires of Britain and France. Communism provided a new authoritarian cement to keep it together when other colonial empires were cracking. With the end of communism and dismantling of communist system the Russian empire has started crumbling. Central Asian Republics had nothing in common with Russia. Even then certain common interests, particularly in the field of economy and defense, developed during the last seventy years, may keep them together in the same form

for some time.

Kashmir on the other hand has been an integral part of India geographically, culturally and politically. It cannot be cut asunder from India. Pull of Pakistan is temporary because Pakistan itself cannot remain cut off from Hindustan for long.

It would be in the best interest of Pakistan to accept the suggestion put forth by the USA about treating the Line of Actual Control as an international boundary between India and Pakistan. Acceptance of this reality on the ground will only give de jure recognition to what has been a de-facto reality since January 1, 1949. With goodwill on both sides this line can be rationalized to make it a defensible border for both India and Pakistan. As things are, Pakistan is bound to be a gainer in such a rationalization of this line.

But if Pakistan persists in its intransigence in the hope that war by proxy that it has been waging in the valley since 1988 will secure for it what it could not secure through three wars with India, then India, too, will have to pay back in the same coin.

As things are, Pakistan is moving on the path of war for which it has chosen the ground of its own choice. Failure on its part to retrace is bound to lead to an open war in which India may chose ground of its own choice. Maybe destiny is driving Pakistan to its doom. According to Maharishi Aurobindo's forecast, the time for the end of Pakistan and partition is coming. Pakistan has failed to cut itself off from its Indian or Hindu past in spite of the worst efforts of its Islamic rulers during the past four decades. It is going to break down under the weight of its own contradictions. The war toward which it is moving may prove to be a decisive catalytic agent for ending Pakistan. That will ultimately end the problem, including Kashmir problem, that appeared on the scene as off-shoots of the Pakistan problem. Till then India will have to live with the Kashmir problem in some form or the other.

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